

# SHORT HISTORY OF IRELAND

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# SHORT HISTORY OF IRELAND

ADAPTED FROM

A birds-eye view of Irish History by Sir  
Charles Gavan Duffy, for Supplementary  
Reading in our Parish Schools

BY

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CHICAGO

REVISED BY THE EMINENT IRISH SCHOLAR

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## Dedication

ST. PIUS RECTORY,  
FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY, 1901.

That Ireland and her gifted people, who, from the earliest ages have done so much for religion and education, might be better known and honored is the reason for the publication of this little volume.

With much pleasure, therefore, we dedicate this "Short History of Ireland" to the faithful members of Division No. 25, Ancient Order of Hibernians, who have always shown a warm interest in Catholic Education and have ever given their best support to our Catholic Schools; praying that this ancient and holy spirit will at all times be found amongst Ireland's descendants in America.

THE PASTOR.

*Approved*  
*F. P. A. Geddes*  
*Abps. Chicago -*

1968



## SECTION I.

### EARLY IRISH RECORDS.

Many men refrain from reading Irish history as sensitive and selfish persons refrain from witnessing human suffering. But it is a branch of knowledge as indispensable to the British statesman or publicist as morbid anatomy is to the surgeon. To prescribe remedies without studying the seat of the disease, and the habits of the patient, is empiricism and quackery.

In the rapid survey I propose to make, I will omit whatever can be omitted without loss, and touch only on events the consequences of which were still traceable in the habits and character of the people in the middle of the nineteenth century.

The aboriginal inhabitants, like the ancient Britons across the neighboring channel, or the Gauls on the nearest mainland, were conquered at an early period by a people who identified themselves so completely with their new pos-

sessions that they have come to be regarded as the type of the native race. It was fourteen centuries before Christ that an expedition of Celts from Spain, led by a chief whose name in its Latinised form is Milesius, landed on the island, and after some fierce fighting obtained complete possession of it. They were the Normans of that era, these Milesians, better armed and trained than the natives; disciplined in a higher civilisation, and politic enough to desire not to destroy but to absorb the conquered people. After the conquest the country (according to Celtic traditions) was divided between Heber and Heremon, sons of Milesius, to one or other of whom all the native families of ancient blood delight to trace their pedigree; and to this day the favorite name for an Irishman in poetry and romance is a Milesian.

There were protracted and merciless feuds among the Milesian chiefs and their successors for many generations, feuds such as, nearly two thousand years later, desolated England in the Wars of the Roses. But the annals of every people with patriarchal customs and institutions begin in the same way. They feel unlimited devotion to the sept or tribe, and only a wavering loyalty to the union of tribes called the realm; they ravage and massacre in the name of the

chief who has suffered some indignity from a rival, and answer boldly to the call of a king who is enforcing a national right, or resisting an invader.

The Irish race first felt the contagion of a common purpose not in war, but in labors of devotion and charity. Lying on the extreme verge of Europe, the last land then known to the adventurous Scandinavian, and beyond which fable had scarcely projected its dreams, it was in the fifth century since the Redemption that Christianity reached them. Patricius, a Celt of Gaul, it is said, carried into Erin as a slave by one of the Pagan kings, some of whom made military expeditions to North and South Britain, and even to the Alps and the Loire, became the Apostle of Ireland. Patrick escaped from bondage, was educated at Rome, but in mature manhood insisted on returning to the place of his bondage, to *preach Christianity* to a people who seem to have exercised over the imagination of the Apostle the same spell of sympathy which in later times subdued strangers of many nations. He was received with extraordinary favor, and before his death nearly the whole island had embraced Christianity. In the succeeding century the Church which he planted became possessed by a passion which it has never entirely

lost, the passion for missionary enterprise. Its Fathers projected the conversion of the fierce natives of the Continent to the new creed of humility and self-denial, and by the same humane agents which Patrick had employed in Ireland—persuasion and prayer; a task as generous as any of which history has preserved the record. In this epoch Ireland may be said to have been a Christian Greece, the nurse of science and civilisation. The Pagan annals of the country are overlaid by fable and extravagance, but the foundation of Oxford or the mission of St. Augustine does not lie more visibly within the boundaries of legitimate history than the Irish schools, which attracted students from Britain and Gaul, and sent out missionaries through the countries now known as Western Europe. Among the forests of Germany, on the desert shores of the Hebrides, in the camp of Alfred, at the court of Charlemagne, in the capital of the Christian world, where Michelet describes their eloquence as charming the court of the Emperor, there might be found the fervid preachers and subtle doctors of the Western Isle. It was then that the island won the title still fondly cherished, “*insula sanctorum.*” Writers who are little disposed to make any other concessions to Ireland admit that this was a period of ex-

traordinary activity, and of memorable services to civilisation. The arts, as far as they were the hand-maidens of religion, attained a surprising development. The illuminated copies of the Scriptures, the croziers and chalices which have come down to us from those days, the Celtic crosses and Celtic harps, are witnesses of a distinct and remarkable national culture. The people were still partly shepherds and husbandmen, partly soldiers, ruled by the Chief, the Brehon, and the Priest. Modern philosophers who deplore their fate would find it hard to discover any period, before or since, when they were so prosperous and happy.

A. D.  
792



## SECTION II.

### THE DANES.

After this generous work had obtained a remarkable success, it was disturbed by contests with the Sea Kings, who established settlements on the eastern coast of the island, which interrupted communication with Britain and Gaul. These new-comers burned monasteries, sacked churches, murdered women and priests, and, let it be admitted, built towns on the sea-coast. Before the dangers and troubles of a long interneceine war, the School of the West gradually dwindled away, and it had fallen into complete decay before Brian Borhoime, at the beginning of the eleventh century, finally subdued the invaders, at the Battle of Clontarf. Brian the Brave, holds the same place in the memory of his nation that Alfred the Great won in England by identical services; and to this day wherever enterprise and industry seek new homes—among the villages of the Mis-

sissippi, in the farms and marts of New Zealand, or the cities and gold fields of Australia, you may recognize a settlement of Irish by the rude effigy of a royal warrior carrying in one hand a cross, and in the other the sword which scattered the northern pirates.

### SECTION III.

#### THE NORMAN INVASION.

But other disturbers succeeded to the Danes. In the twelfth century the Norman soldiers, who had conquered England, cast longing eyes on the neighboring island, and found a footing through the clan and dynastic jealousies to which a pastoral people are peculiarly liable. They came, a recent historian declares, with unconscious irony, to complete the work of civilization happily begun by the Danes. The population of the island at that time did not reach half a million, and was distributed into a prodigious number of septs. The country was ruled by five princes, one of whom was Ard-righ or Chief King. Dermot MacMurrough the King of Leinster incurred the wrath of the Ard-righ by an odious crime, and was deposed from his office; and to reinstate himself he obtained the aid of certain Norman knights, of whom the leader is best known to posterity by the by-name

A. D.  
1171

of Strongbow. The Norman soldiers did not reinstate MacMurrough; the native annalists love to record that within a year of his treason he died of a loathsome disease, abandoned by God and man. But before this event Strongbow had married his daughter, to establish in himself a colorable claim to Dermot's kingdom. He took possession of Dublin, the chief town of Leinster, made it the seat of English authority, and distributed huge cantals of the tribal land between himself and his attendant knights. As soon as the first adventures had established a footing, their liege lord Henry II King of England claimed the suzerainty, to which he was entitled by feudal law, and came to Ireland accompanied by an army, which for the period was numerous and powerful, to exercise it in person.

Henry's claim was to be Lord Paramount, a title carrying only a vague and shadowy authority, which left the native princes in possession of supreme power in their own territories; but with this title he and his successors for more than three centuries contented themselves. His claim was founded on a grant from the Pope, then the referee in all national quarrels. It was represented at Rome, by agents of Henry, that the Irish Church had fallen into dangerous discipline, and Adrian IV, who sat in the chair

of Peter at that time, was an Englishman, and probably considered his nation peculiarly fitted to be reformers of morals and conduct. He authorized Henry to inquire into the condition of the Church and the people. It was necessary to satisfy him that the alleged abuses existed, else there was no need of a censor; and in the train of the invaders came the first of a class of functionaries who have reappeared in every subsequent epoch of our history, the official libellers. Gerald Barry, a Welsh monk known after the custom of the age as *Giraldus Cambrensis*, wrote an elaborate Latin treatise designed to prejudice the Irish race with the Holy See, and justify their subjugation. He did his work so effectually, that Pope Adrian's successor, Alexander III, confirmed the grant of Ireland to the English king, on condition that "the barbarous people" should be "recovered from their filthy life and abominable conversation" and "the rude and disordered Church" reformed; and after seven centuries his libels are still occasionally cited for a kindred purpose, by persons of the same pursuit.

A. D.  
1185

The authority established by Henry was acknowledged in Dublin, where he fixed the seat of his government, and in a limited territory beyond it known as the Pale; which as the name

implies, was a rudely fortified camp on a large scale, whose boundaries shifted with circumstances. Beyond the Pale nothing was changed; the native prince ruled his principality and the native chief ruled his clan as of old. Many of them made submission to Henry as bearer of the Pope's letter, and acknowledged him as Lord of Ireland; for such submission little was regarded in an age of constant warfare, if it did not involve the payment of heavy tribute or the concession of territory. Some of them, especially the Princes of Ulster, would have no dealings with him on any terms.\*

Throughout the Middle Ages the Pale was often pushed into new territories, when a Lord Deputy of unusual vigor took the field; it sometimes dwindled away when affairs were going ill in England. It was held at the cost of frequent wars and constant vigilance, and yielded little by way of tribute. In every generation an attempt was made to throw off the foreign yoke; but it was generally made by an individual chief or a union of chiefs, who resented some recent

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\* "He (Henry II.) departed out of Ireland without striking one blow or building one castle, or planting one garrison among the Irish: neither left he behind him one true subject more than those that he found there at his first coming over, which were only the English adventurers."—Sir John Davies.

wrong; it was imperfectly supported by the nation, and the troops of the English Lord Deputy had always Irish allies, who hated an ambitious neighbor worse than they hated the stranger. It is a marvel to some critics that the whole population of the island did not unite in these enterprises; but a people so circumstanced have never united against an invader. They were half soldiers, half shepherds, living in clans, subject to chiefs of their own name and blood, and caring little for any other authority. They lived indeed, much as the same race lived in the Scottish Highlands till the reign of George III. The jealousy of septs and the rivalry of chiefs prevented a national union, as similar jealousy had prevented the Britons from uniting in a national resistance to the Saxons and as similar jealousy divided the Highland clans into two hostile factions twenty generations later, when a prince of their own blood took the field at Preston Pans. The patriotism which combines in its sympathy the entire *patria*, was ill understood in rude ages by men of any race or clime. The chiefs of subjugated Gaul served in the legions of Caesar; the Saxons fought under the banner of the Plantagenets, and the Cid with the most renowned Christian Knights of Spain sometimes took service with the Moors. The

invaders themselves yielded to this spirit of the age, and were soon divided by as fierce jealousies as the Celtic chiefs. Norman barons made war on each other on the slightest occasion, and in the end made war on the king from whom they held. Nevertheless some generous English historians can recognize in resistance, continuing through so many generations in Ireland, only a turbulence and discontent native to the Celtic race. In the case of any other country they would probably find no insuperable difficulty in understanding why the dominion of strangers was odious, or why the desire to overthrow it was regarded as honorable and praiseworthy.\*

It would have been a blessing to Ireland if the resistance had been successful; a blessing even if the conquest had been consummated as

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\* The Saxons harassed the Norman conquerors by less legitimate methods, but one may learn from the triumphant tone in which Lord Macaulay tells the story, that to trouble a foreign invader in England was meritorious, even when it was hopeless to expel him.

"Some bold men, the favorite heroes of our oldest ballads, betook themselves to the woods and there in defiance of curfew laws and forest laws waged a predatory war against their oppressors. Assassination was an event of daily occurrence. Many Normans suddenly disappeared leaving no trace. The corpses of many were found bearing the marks of violence. Death by torture was denounced against the murderers, and strict search was made for them, but generally in vain; for the whole nation was in a conspiracy to screen them." —Macaulay's England.

it was consummated in England and France. But it was her unhappy destiny to obtain neither the advantages of peace nor of war. Outside the Pale an Irish chief no more regarded a Plantagenet or a Tudor as his lawful sovereign, than a Highland chief in later ages so regarded a Stuart or a Guelph; but it is certain that the chiefs living within the Pale or bordering on it, would have made peace if they had been permitted to do so. In the reign of Edward I., and again in the reign of Edward III, they petitioned to be admitted to the benefit of English law and were refused. The Normans who fought for empire commonly respected the customs of a conquered race, and speedily incorporated them into their dominion; and a similar policy would have satisfied the general design of the politic Norman kings of England; but it has always been their fate in Ireland to lie at the mercy of their agents; the managers of the English interest, the officials of the Pale, "the Undertakers," as they were called in later times, wanted estates for themselves, and any policy which interfered with this purpose was thwarted or reversed. Had the chiefs become feudatories of the king there would be no longer any pretence for harassing them with military expeditions and seizing their lands as the spoil of

battle. They accordingly advised that "the Irishery might not be naturalized without damage or prejudice to themselves or to the Crown," and this advice was accepted. It was a struggle not for supremacy but for the soil; and it went on, as we shall see, under varying conditions, for more than twenty generations.\*

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\* Mr. Froude in his book on the English in Ireland (Vol. I., page 13), affirms that "everything which she most valued for herself—her laws and liberties, her orderly and settled government, the most ample security for person and property, England's first desire was to give to Ireland in fullest measure."

For this statement I cannot find the least foundation in history. It might be alleged with equal truth that the first desire of the British Parliament was to give the Jews in fullest measure the benefit of the British constitution, but that no Hebrew could be induced to enter Parliament till the middle of the nineteenth century; or that the passionate longing of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge to open their doors to Dissenters was baffled and thwarted by Nonconformist obstinacy till about the same era. To cite evidence on this point is an affront to good sense and educated opinion; but as Irish history is a blank to many otherwise well-informed persons, I take an extract from Sir John Davies (Attorney-General of James I. in Ireland) on the identical question. "This then I note as a great defect in the civil policy of this kingdom, in that for the space of 350 years at least after the conquest first attempted, the English lawes were not communicated to the Irish, nor the benefit and protection thereof allowed unto them; though they earnestly desired and sought the same. For as long as they were out of the protection of the laws, so as every Englishman might oppress, spoyle and kill them without controulment, howe was it possible they should be other

## SECTION IV.

### CONFISCATION.

When the adventurers got estates, those who secured the best returned to England to enjoy their plunder in peace; and with them began the pernicious system of absentee proprietors. The Normans who held fiefs in France and England were compelled to elect in which country they would reside and perform the duties for which the fief was created; the second estate went to a distinct heir. In Ireland the practice of holding the land and not performing the duties continues to this day. The Normans who fixed their homes in Ireland naturally modified their policy. They desired to live in friendship with the natives, and even to protect them from new aggressions. The

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than outlawes and enemies to the crowne of England." And again—"Whereby it is manifest, that such as had the government of Ireland under the crown of England did intend to make a perpetual separation of enmity between the English and the Irish."

succeeding generation came to have some affection for the country and the people; they often took Irish wives, and their children were fostered in Irish families. Their heirs spoke the native tongue, wore the national mantle and barret, called themselves by native names, cherished the legends and laws of the Celts; and when in turn they came to rule, entertained bards and Brehons, and desired to be no more than Irish chiefs. The great proprietors who lived in England, the new arrivals who in each reign came in fresh swarms, as men visit a wreck on a neighboring coast, in search of plunder, and the officials of the Pale, hated these Old English—so they came to be called—as bitterly as they hated the natives. They could not invariably be relied on to promote the Lord Deputy's designs, they began to have some pride of country, and were not always ready to make war on their kith and kin in the interest of the Pale. To check these offences a law was passed in the time of Edward III., which peremptorily forbade these relations with the natives under penalty of forfeiture or death.\* To speak the native tongue, to use an Irish name, to wear the Irish apparel, or to adopt any of the customs of the country—"anie guize or fashion of the Irish"—was punishable by loss

A. D.  
1366

\*Statute of Kilkenny, A. D. 1366.

of their entire lands; but to marry an Irish-woman, to entrust their children to an Irish nurse, or give them Irish sponsors at baptism—these grave offences were declared high treason. All men of Irish blood were forbidden to reside within a walled town, and, lest the Celts should obtain influence in a powerful spiritual confederacy, no native was to be received as a postulant in any monastery within the Pale.

Later critics affirm that strong measures were justified because the native customs were such as good policy required to be suppressed. For example, the land belonged under the Breton law, not to the chief but to the sept: a custom which was highly inconvenient, to those who meditated confiscating it. Murder was punished by an *cric* (or fine) levied off the murderer and his kinsmen, instead of by the natural and legitimate method of strangulation. A race among whom capital punishment was unknown manifestly deserved no consideration; a money penalty for such a crime was a clear proof of barbarism, for obviously it is only the honor of women and the peace of families which may properly be made the subject of a judicial tariff. Another offence to right feeling was their national festival, derived from Pagan times, an assembly in the open air, and at a later period

in the hall of the native chief or the Norman baron, where they listened to the songs of bards and the tales of *seanachies*, and witnessed feats of arms. This simple enjoyment a recent critic graciously compares to a *corroborie* of Maories. It might be pleaded, perhaps, that it was at such a *corroborie* the father of epic poetry sang the wrath of Achilles, and the death of Priam; but let us rather admit the offence, and beseech the critic to make allowance for the rudeness of the age. It needed nearly seven centuries more to attain to the flower of civilized recreation in the Music Hall and the prize ring.

If the statesmen of the Pale taught the natives the use of the gallows it must be admitted that they placed the employment of it under salutary rules. An Irishman who murdered or maimed an Englishman was of course hanged, notwithstanding the law of Eric. But the killing of a native by an Englishman, even in time of peace, was no offence in the eye of the law; it was sufficient answer to the charge to plead that the murdered man was "a mere Irishman." The goods of a native might be taken at discretion, as he could not maintain an action in any court appointed by the Crown. In official language, in all orders in Council, in Acts of Parliament the natives for ten generations and upwards were

described as the “Irish enemy”—a phrase which implies all the license of open warfare.\*

The Irish peasant is said to be lazy at home; he is confessedly industrious and enterprising in every other country where he has found a footing. It is proper to note that the government of the Lord Deputy in those days laid the foundation of this habit, by a practice which would have destroyed industry among the Dutch or the Chinese. Soldiers were quartered on any district at the discretion of their officers, with the right of exacting whatever they required, without limit and without payment. A vice-regal chaplain in later times has described the effect on the people. “Their properties, their lives, the chastity of their families were all exposed to barbarians who sought only to glut their brutal passions; and by their horrible excesses purchased the curse of God and man.”† And an Attorney-General notes the necessary result. “For when the husbandman had laboured all the yeare, the soldier in one night did con-

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\* These are the facts which the annals of the period place beyond controversy. One may read in Mr. Froude, who apparently dreams his facts, that the conquerors strove painfully “to extend the forms of English liberty, her trial by jury, her local courts, her parliament” to the Irish people.

† Leland's *History of Ireland*.

sume the fruites of all his labour, *longique perit labor irritus anni.* Had hee reason then to manure the lande for the next year?"\*

A. D.  
1454

Those who cannot have peace can at least have war; and during the contest between York and Lancaster and in the still unsettled reign of Henry VII., the Irish pressed on the Pale with constant success. By one of those curious, and as it seemed providential, compensations which history discloses, the most successful leader of the most protracted conflict with the Pale was a descendant of McMurrrough who brought in the Normians.† To him others succeeded with changeful fortune, but on the whole the natives prospered. Castle after castle, and town after town, pulled down the banner of St. George. When Henry VIII. was jousting in the Field of the Cloth of Gold within the English Pale in France, the English Pale in Ireland, which had once embraced six counties and stretched its offshoots deep into the South and deep into the North, was reduced to a territory which might be conveniently inspected in a morning's ride from Dublin Castle.

A. D.  
1520

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\* Sir John Davies' Discourses.

† Art. Kavanagh.

A. D.  
1551

## SECTION V.

### THE STATE RELIGION.

The Reformation suddenly changed the condition of the contest, and the parties to it. The English Crown which claimed the lordship of Ireland under the authority of the Pope, was now at war with the Pope, and might be considered to have forfeited its original title. The little parliament of the Pale, however, consisting chiefly of servants of the Crown, accepted the law already adopted in England, acknowledging the King as supreme spiritual head of the Church, and giving him complete control of its temporalities; and in another session barred the Pope's title by declaring Henry of right King of Ireland, and not merely Lord Paramount as theretofore.

The officials of the Pale might please his Highness, but the Irish and the old English were of a different temper. He could call himself king if he thought proper, but his pretension to determine such inflammatory questions as the

mass, the sacraments, and the primacy of the Holy See, the bulk of neither race would tolerate. Strange stories of Henry's levity and cruelty, of his plunder of religious houses, and of his ill-regulated passion for new wives and new opinions, came across the Channel; and we may well believe that when this strange claim was canvassed at the board, or announced from the altar, it was heard with some mixture of contempt and horror as the revelation of Mormonism excited in our own day among a people less prone than the Irish to reverence or enthusiasm.\*

**A. D.**  
**1553** After the brief reign of Edward VI. the throne once again was filled by a Catholic Sovereign. She employed herself hanging and burning the followers of the new faith, as her father had hanged and burned the followers of the old faith. In Dublin the Catholics were restored to power,

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\* This is not the last judgment pronounced on the subject. Writers of great authority, in our own time, declare that the Irish ought to have accepted the Reformation, and that they have been justly punished by all that ensued for their perversity in refusing to accept it. Our deference to the opinion of these eminent persons on the point is disturbed by a doubt whether after two centuries and a half further experience, they accept a tittle of it themselves, or regard the authority of Henry and Crammer with any more respect, at bottom, than the authority of Joe Smith and Orson Pratt.

and used their authority with singular forbearance. It is a fact which stands alone in the history of that troubled century in Europe, that during the whole reign, no Protestant in Ireland suffered death for his opinions. But so little did religion modify the fundamental relations between the countries, that Catholic Mary and Catholic Philip confiscated the native lands in a wide district of Leinster, which still retains the names of the Queen's County and the King's County in memory of that transaction. Mary has left an odious reputation; and the horror excited by her cruelties is made a reproach, to this day, against the only people who having power did not imitate them.

The religious quarrel smouldered, or only broke out in turmoils till the time of Elizabeth. Laws were made to compel conformity, but they were ill-enforced; preachers of the new creed were appointed to convert the people, but they clung to the Pale and the strong towns; which the king knew how to convert without their assistance. Elizabeth, however, determined that all Ireland must be brought to submission, and two wars of unprecedented fierceness and duration were the result.

A. D.  
**1558**



## SECTION VI.

### TWO GREAT WARS.

The Geraldines, the most powerful of the Anglo-Norman Barons, took the field in Desmond, and were joined by the bulk of the native chiefs in that ancient territory, but they had no concert with the Irish princes in the north, who sat still and aided neither party. The chiefs of Desmond maintained the contest with varying fortune for several years. The first English army was destroyed in two or three campaigns, but another was got on foot to take its place, and an expenditure, which for that age was enormous, incurred to equip it efficiently. Carew, a stern skilful soldier, was the commander in Munster, and partly by successful fighting, partly by unscrupulous intrigue, of which also he was a master, brought the war to a close. How he improved his victory in the interest of the Queen and the Church may still be read in his own triumphant language in the

*Pacata Hibernia.* If the Mohawks had chronicles they could scarcely match the grim enjoyment with which the tale of horrors is told. To comprehend the devastations inflicted on Munster the reader will have to recall the atrocities in Bulgaria over which humanity shuddered in our own day. Old and young, men and women, were butchered indiscriminately. "Blind and feeble men, boys and girls, sick persons, idiots and old people" are enumerated in the Irish annals as among the slain. Those whom the sword could not reach, were deliberately given a prey to famine. The cattle were everywhere killed or driven away into strong places, and the crops and houses delivered to the flames. One of Carew's lieutenants boasted that in a wide and fertile district, he had left neither horn nor corn nor house unburned. When every show of resistance ceased, the slaughter did not cease. It is still only by modern examples that the spirit and scope of this war of extermination can be understood. A French marshal in our day who stifled with smoke and fire a tribe of Arabs sheltering in a cavern, is denounced as a monster, but this device was repeatedly anticipated in the Desmond war by the soldiers of Elizabeth. More men, women and children were killed by starvation in pursuance of the

orders of the Lord President, when there was no longer an Irish soldier in arms, than perished in the three French revolutions by the crimes of the Jacobins, the Reds and the Communists. Half the population of the island was destroyed, and Ireland was pronounced to be "pacified" as in later times "peace reigned in Warsaw."\*

Under the Tudors the assent of the sovereign was not a figure of speech; Elizabeth, the haughtiest and most exacting of a jealous race, personally scrutinized and sanctioned the measures adopted. She sent her thanks and even her blessings to her "faithful George," for his good services among the Munster Papists. Let the reader note how hard it is, even at this day, to harmonize the opinion of the two nations. These were the golden days of good Queen Bess, when the gallant Raleigh flourished as a type of adventurous chivalry, and Edmund Spenser was the greatest but one of the poets who have made the age illustrious. But the gallant Raleigh was in Munster during these transactions hunting for Irish lands; he got forty thousand acres of the Desmond confiscation, and paid for them

A. D.  
1585

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\*A single specimen of the *Pacata Hibernia* will suffice to indicate its character. An English expedition entered an Irish camp where, says the chronicler, "they found none but hurt and sick men, whose pains and lives by the soldiers were soon determined."

by services worthy of Nina Saib; and the poet who was in attendance on his patron to pick up the scraps and fragments, got also a scanty meal of forfeited lands; and rivalled Giraldus Cambrensis in eagerness to serve the adventurers, with the pen which wrote the Faery Queen. Of the daughters of Henry one has descended to posterity branded by the wrath of her subjects with the infamous title of the "bloody queen"; but it was not the lady who left Desmond without horn or corn or rooftree upstanding; she we know was the grace and glory of her age.\*

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\* After describing scenes which he witnessed when the war was over, when the fugitives came creeping "out of every corner of the woods and glynnes on their hands, for their legges would not bear them," and for food "they did eat the dead carrion happy where they could finde them, yea and one another soon after"—the gentle Edmund proposes as a happy method of making an end of the race, much sooner than could be otherwise hoped for, that they should not be permitted to till their land or pasture their cattle next season, and thereupon he felt assured "they would quickly consume themselves and devour one another."

A. D.  
**1591**

When the Desmond war was long finished and half a million of acres of forfeited land distributed among the successful soldiers, and their camp-followers, the northern chiefs renewed the contest on their own account. This time it was the Celt who took the field, and the half of the island which the former wars had scarcely reached was called to arms. The leaders of the northern revolt were the hereditary princes of Ulster, O'Neill and O'Donnell.\* Hugh O'Neill, who by age and capacity was the natural head of the confederacy, defeated the English in two great battles, and the whole of the north fell under his sway. He marched into Munster, and the remnant of the Irish clans, still left after the Desmond massacre, joined him. Elizabeth sent Essex against him with a great force, but Essex

A. D.  
**1598**

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\* For the curious training of O'Neill and O'Donnell respectively see a note at the end of the chapter.

A. D.  
1599

accomplished nothing, and returned to London to disgrace and death. Philip of Spain sent some help in men and arms, but help so feeble and tardy, and under a leader so pretentious and exacting, that it proved a painful embarrassment in the end. At length the Lord Deputy proposed terms, which O'Neill deemed he could honorably accept. He and his allies were taken into the Queen's favor, confirmed in their possessions and the free exercise of their religion guaranteed to them. Hugh was to lay down his title of the O'Neill, and content himself with that of Earl of Tyrone, while O'Donnell, in lieu of his Celtic chieftaincy, became Earl of Tyrconnel; and it was conditioned that in future English sheriffs were to frame panels and English judges to expound the law throughout Ulster, and the chiefs were to hold their land directly from the Crown. There was great rage among the soldiers and officials of Dublin that there were no lands to be distributed after all; but there were better things in store for them than they thought of.\*

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\* The substitution of a feudal tenure for the native *gavelkind* (the tenure of the not utterly barbarous county of Kent to this day) had long been a main object with English statesmen. Henry strove hard for it. He desired according to the eminent historian whom I have already quoted "to change the loose order of inheritance for an orderly succession," and to confer

While the submission of O'Neill was being completed James I. came to the throne. There was great joy in Ireland at the accession of the young King of Scots, for while he was still a pretender he had assiduously cultivated the good will of the Irish, as a prince of their own Milesian stock, and the son of a queen who was reputed to have died a martyr for the Catholic faith. Now, it might be hoped, the nation would have fair play, at least, and even perhaps a gleam of court favor; but his English counsellors knew that he could scarce hold the English

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upon the chiefs "a legitimate jurisdiction derived from the king"—for it was the interest of the chiefs the bountiful prince had in view. But while they had arms in their hands, there was no persuading the perverse Celts to accept this royal benevolence; now, however, the reform was duly accomplished. Under the Celtic tenure a chief was only joint owner with the clan; by this change he became in the eye of the English law absolute proprietor of the soil. It was a boon like that which Satan in popular fable bestows on his dupes. When the chief possessed only a life interest, he could forfeit in case of attainder only a life interest; when he became proprietor in fee, he would forfeit the estate; and in good time, three-fourths of the soil of Ireland was confiscated to the Crown under the operation of this royal bounty. With the sept it fared still worse than with the chief; at one stroke from joint owners of the tribal lands they were reduced to the condition of tenants at will, and deprived of an inheritance to which their title was as good in the court of conscience as Elizabeth's to the throne of Henry. And tenants at will, for the most part, they remain to this day.

throne if he made concessions to Ireland, and one of his earliest acts was a proclamation announcing that liberty of conscience he could not grant. But though religious liberty must be refused, English law would be introduced to every part of the island, the sword be sheathed, and every man indiscriminately taken into the favor of the king's majestie.\* In this happy era the Irish were destined to learn how much more destructive an instrument than the sword that was sheathed is the inkhorn, when it is placed on the council-board to frame Acts of Parliament and Orders in Council. Though gallant adventurers could no longer, in the language of the *Pacata Hibernia*, "have the killing of some Irish" as a morning's pastime, they might still, if they were skilful, enjoy much the same recreation, in the way of devising beneficial measures for the country.

Before quitting the Middle Ages it will be instructive to note, that during the era of the Tudors, their agents in Dublin Castle habitually practised arts which we are taught to associate exclusively with Italian nobles and Eastern despots. To cut off dangerous chiefs some were

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\* Sir John Davies. It was at the opening of this new era that Sir John, then Attorney-General, made the conclusive admission regarding the previous government of the country, quoted at page 88.

trapped by proffers of friendship and made prisoners for life, some were poisoned with gifts of wine or food sent to them with profuse pledges of friendship; others were slaughtered on their own hearths in the exercise of hospitality to their assassins, and many were inveigled to public conferences that they might be more conveniently murdered in batches. Not the Irish annals alone, but the State Papers of the period supply conclusive evidence of this system, and of the official authority under which it was practiced. It helped, doubtless, to stamp on the native mind an ideal of Sassenach duplicity which Englishmen find revolting and incredible.

In the transactions now to be briefly described, and which form the foundations of our modern history, English writers in general are agreed that the paramount nation exhibited singular wisdom and benevolence. Through constantly changing and troubled times they were always right; right when they did in Ireland the exact reverse of what they were accustomed to do at home; right, by a singular good fortune, when they disregarded rules of morality and justice, which elsewhere are of permanent authority.



## SECTION VIII.

### "THE PLANTATION OF ULSTER."

Lord Bacon was of opinion that a large settlement of English husbandmen in Ireland able to guard as well as to till the land, would help to secure the interest of the Crown; the only question was where to plant them. O'Neill and Tyrconnell had proved dangerous adversaries; they possessed a fertile territory, and as their "loose order of inheritance" had been duly changed into "an orderly succession," they were quite ripe for confiscation. But they had been ostentatiously received into favor at the close of the late war, and some decent pretence for destroying them so soon was indispensable. It was found in a letter conveniently dropped in the precincts of Dublin Castle, disclosing a new conspiracy. Of a conspiracy there was not then, and has not been since discovered, any evidence worth recording; but where so noble a booty was to be distributed by the Crown, one

can conceive how ill-timed and disloyal any doubt of their treason would have appeared at the Court of James, or of the Lord Deputy. They were proclaimed traitors, and fled to the Continent to solicit aid from the Catholic powers.\* Without delay James and his counsellors set to work. The King applied to the City of London to take up the lands of the wild Irish.

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They were well watered, he assured them, plentifully supplied with fuel, with good store of all the necessaries for man's sustenance; and moreover yielded timber, hides, tallow, canvas, and cordage for the purposes of commerce. The

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\* In his "Flight of the Earls" the Rev. C. P. Meehan has painted with singular power and feeling the adventures of O'Neill and his associates at foreign courts, beseeching help in vain; till at length weary of the hopeless task one after another laid down his weary head in a foreign grave. It may be noted that the precise offence imputed to the chiefs to justify an enormous confiscation was soliciting aid against their lawful sovereign from Philip of Spain. James, who considered this offence worthy of so signal a punishment, received agents in his own Court from the Netherlands, soliciting his aid against the same Philip, who was the lawful sovereign of Flanders and Brabant quite as much as James was lawful sovereign of Tyrone or Tyrconnell. But one learns from a study of Anglo-Irish history to discriminate. When a Catholic nation invites the assistance of a Catholic prince, they are perverse rebels properly punished with the heaviest penalties; but when a Protestant nation invites the assistance of a Protestant prince they are generous patriots, vindicating the rights of conscience and of their native country.

Companies of Skinners, Fishmongers, Haberdashers, Vintners and the like thereupon became Absentee Proprietors and have drawn Irish rents from that day to this. Six counties in Ulster were confiscated, and not merely the chiefs, but the entire population dispossessed. The fruitful plains of Armagh, the rich pastoral glens that lie between the sheltering hills of Antrim, the undulating meadow lands stretching by the noble lakes and rivers of Fermanagh, passed from the race which had possessed them since before the redemption of mankind. It is not difficult to see in imagination the old race, broken by battle and suffering, and deprived, by a trick of state, of their hereditary chiefs, retiring slowly and with bitter hearts before the stranger. The alluvial lands were given to English courtiers whom the Scotch king found it necessary to placate, and to Scotch partisans whom he dared not reward in England. The peasants driven out of the tribal lands to burrow in the hills or bogs were not treated according to any law known among civilized men. Under Celtic tenure the treason of the chief, if he committed treason, affected them no more than the offences of a tenant for life affect a remainder man in our modern practice. Under the feudal system they were innocent feudatories who

would pass with the forfeited land to the Crown, with all their personal rights undisturbed. It was in this manner that the famous Plantation of Ulster was founded.

The method of settlement is stated with commendable simplicity by the latest historian. The "planters" got all the land worth their having; what was not worth their having—the barren mountains and trackless morass, which after two centuries still in many cases yield no human food—were left to those who in the language of an Act of Parliament of the period were "natives of the realm of Irish blood, being descended from those who did inherit and possess the land." The confiscated territory amounted to two millions of acres. "Of these a million and a half," says Mr. Froude, "bog, forest, and mountain, were restored to the Irish. The half million acres of fertile land were settled with families of Scottish and English Protestants." The natives were not altogether content with this arrangement, and their perversity has been visited with eloquent censure by indignant critics down to our own day. There is reason to believe, however, that if a settlement of Irish Catholics had been made in England by Mary or James II., on whom the best lands of Norfolk and Suffolk, Essex and Sussex, Kent and Sur-

rey, were bestowed, while the English were left only the forest, mountain, and morass, that that just and temperate people would not have entirely approved of the transaction, and might even be tempted to call it in question when an opportunity offered.

The new-comers have been painted in unfavorable colors by critics not unfriendly to the plantation. In many cases they were good soldiers or skilful husbandmen, who under more favorable conditions would have been an element of strength to the country. But the settlement had the fever of usurpation upon it. The rightful owners were forthcoming, and the planters held by no higher title than naked force, good as long as force was on their side, but no longer. Fences were erected, fruit-trees planted, simple churches built, and after a time white-walled bawns rose in the midst of waving corn-fields and rosy orchards. It was a pleasant sight to see; but within a gunshot of the gay harvest and garden, the remnant of the native race, to whom the land had descended since the Redemption, were pining in misery and bitter discontent. The barren hills or frozen bogs to which they were banished, yielded little food except the milk of their kine. "The mountainy men," so the new settlers contemptuously named them,

would have been more magnanimous than any race who have lived on this globe, if they acquiesced patiently in the transfer. They could not forget, any more than their kinsmen in the Scottish Highlands, that

“The fertile plain, the softened vale  
Were once the birthright of the Gael.”\*

If their efforts to “spoil the spoiler,”\* and “from the robber rend his prey,”\* do not thrill sympathetic boudoirs, and if the scenes of their exploits are not the annual haunt of sentimental tourists, it is not because the exploits were different from those so favored, but because an adequate poet has not yet arisen to interpret them to mankind.†

The abolition of the loose method of inheritance (by which Irish lands used to pass to the right owners) was followed by another ameliora-

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\**Lady of the Lake.*

† Such a poet may perhaps arise in unexpected places; for the Irish struggle has exercised a strange fascination over young imaginative Englishmen. Lord Macaulay began his splendid experiment in ballad poetry by singing the Celtic resistance to the invasion of Strongbow. Lord Lytton’s first published poem, “O’Neill,” had for its hero that unconquerable Hugh who so long baffled the arms of Elizabeth; and Southey has celebrated with passionate sympathy Robert Emmet, the last Irish rebel who gave his life for his cause.

tion, without which it would have been incomplete. When a Catholic proprietor died leaving children under age, the king like a true father of his people undertook the charge of the orphans. A Court of Wards was established for the purpose, and as James could not get a wife out of Spain for his son, on which condition he was ready to "kiss the Pope's panteufle," he became an ardent Reformer, and it was ordered that the children should be strictly educated in the Reformed religion. If they were girls they were provided with Protestant husbands by James or Buckingham. This device proved a most successful stroke of State policy, and with the favors and blandishments of the Court judiciously distributed, did more than the laws of Henry and Elizabeth to win over the old families. Education is stronger than natural instincts or inherited opinions. The Janisaries were Christian orphans trained to be Musselman by the Sultan, and the most remorseless enemies of the Celt in the next generation were O'Briens and Butlers, Fitzgeralds and Burkes, who became more English than the English themselves.

The experiment in Ulster naturally provoked imitation. *Charles I.* was as eager to plant as his father. He was represented in Ireland by a trenchant Lord Deputy, remembered in that

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country as "Black Tom" and memorable in English history as *Thomas Wentworth* Earl of Strafford. Wentworth resolved to make a settlement in Connaught to rival the settlement in Ulster. The first business was to clear out the owners in possession. The wildest inventions in "Candide," intended to illustrate human absurdity and wickedness, will not match the pretences on which the forfeiture of these estates was founded. In the previous reign when the king substituted "an orderly succession" for the Celtic method, the Connaught proprietors had duly submitted and paid him a heavy fine to have their new patents enrolled in Chancery. The officers of the Court, wilfully or ignorantly, omitted to make the proper entries in their books; and this misfeasance was declared by Court lawyers to have forfeited the lands of the province to the king. It is a maxim that no man can profit by his own fraud; but maxims are not made to bind sovereign princes. As the blessing of English law had been extended to the whole nation, it was necessary that this opinion should be confirmed by the judgment of a Court and the verdict of a jury. If a dozen of his fellow countrymen found a Connaught proprietor's title bad, calumny itself must be mute. Wentworth marched to the West at the head

of a formidable military force, as "good lookers-on," he said, and accompanied by the necessary retinue of judges and lawyers to perform the judicial ceremony. Some of the juries were frightened into verdicts; some were wheedled into them, for to sharpen the persuasive power of the judges Wentworth secretly gave these learned personages a percentage on the forfeitures. But in Galway the juries were of opinion that, notwithstanding the misconduct of the officers of Chancery, the land did not belong to the king, but to the owners, and found accordingly. Wentworth's method of encountering this difficulty may help to mitigate our surprise that the Irish people did not cordially love the system of jurisprudence, which has undoubtedly secured equal justice to many generations of Englishmen. The jurors who *found a verdict* according to their conscience, and not according to the wishes of the Lord Deputy, were immediately brought before the Castle Chamber in Dublin, and fined £4,000 each and their estates seized till the fine was paid; a penalty the equivalent of which would impoverish many a noble of the present day. The sheriff who summoned the jurors was dealt with in a more decisive fashion; he was first fined and then flung into prison, where he was kept till he died of the

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process; an example to future officials to array their panels more discreetly.\*

\* This was not Strafford's only experiment in manipulating juries. The House of Commons, on the occasion of his impeachment, cited among the catalogue of his offences in Ireland—"That jurors who gave their verdict according to their consciences, were censured in the Castle Chamber in great fines; sometimes pillored, with loss of ears, and bored through the tongue, and sometimes marked in the forehead with other infamous punishments." Strafford, who was a wise tyrant, did other work in Ireland, however. He got flax-seed from Holland, and workmen from Belgium, and fostered a linen trade among the plantators, which is prosperous to our day. Fortunately for Ulster, linen was not a staple of England. Strafford's most notable proceeding is still to be mentioned. Though Charles' character as a compound of egotism and faithlessness is one of the most familiar studies in English history, it may borrow a characteristic touch from Irish records. Before these transactions he appealed in sore stress to his Irish subjects for a grant of money; the Catholics took his wants into consideration and offered the sum of £120,000, provided that no proprietor sixty years in undisturbed possession should be troubled respecting his title; and that Catholics should be allowed to practise as barristers without taking the oath of supremacy. Charles took the money, and promised the graces (as they were named) which they desired. The Puritans, however, grew daily stronger, and to keep the promise of tolerating Popery, even in so small a matter as not cheating them out of their estates, soon became inconvenient. Some of the bishops of the Irish Establishment transmitted a fierce remonstrance to England against any concession to Catholics, and as Charles was a good Churchman and loved his bishops, he was sorely perplexed; but above all there was the glory and profit of making a plantation of Connaught no longer possible if he kept his word. Wentworth saw an easy way out of the difficulty; let him simply not

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## SECTION IX.

### THE CONFEDERATION OF KILKENNY.

Nearly a generation had elapsed since the Plantation of Ulster, when the troubles between Charles and his Parliament approached a crisis. The Scot rose against the king and invaded England in the interest of the Opposition, and Charles summoned to his aid the army which Wentworth maintained in Ireland; an army recruited in part from Irish Catholics. In the House of Commons this project evoked a storm of resistance. It was permissible to call a Scottish army into England, and it was a natural right, which no one would be mad enough to dispute, to send an English army into Ireland, but if an Irish army were brought into England,

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keep his word; and he for his part was willing to assist so worthy a purpose by bearing all the blame. Charles' whole character is painted in the two facts, that he broke his promise without scruple after he had spent the money, and thankfully accepted Strafford's offer to stand between him and the infamy he had incurred.

on any pretence whatever, that was an outrage sufficient to release subjects from their allegiance. The Irish who did not quite see the force of this distinction, began to bestir themselves. They heard of threats in the Commons that Popery must be extirpated; Pym, the leader of the Puritans in the House of Commons, boasted, it was said, that Parliament would not leave a Papist in Ireland; they noted the successful rebellion of the Scots, they saw their old enemies in conflict, and the time seemed propitious to regain their ancient lands, and to save such as remained from obsequious judges and panic-stricken juries. ~~Roger Moore~~, a man greatly gifted both to project and to persuade, and whom contemporaries of all parties pronounce of unblemished honor, brought leading men together, kindled them with his own convictions, and in fine there was now a genuine conspiracy on foot to seize the seat of government, and summon the Irish race to arms. The servant of one of the conspirators betrayed his master, several of the leaders were seized, and the government in Dublin put effectually on their guard. But the North was beyond their control. There the clans who were pillaged by James, or their immediate descendants, rose on an autumn night forty thousand strong, led by

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Sir Phelim O'Neill and other chiefs of their own blood, drove out the English and Scotch settlers, and repossessed themselves of their ancient tribal lands. This is the transaction known to English writers as the "Great Popish Rebellion," and the "Popish Massacre." By whatever contumelious nickname it may be branded, what happened in Ireland is what would have happened in any branch of the human family. When a favorable opportunity offered they "spoiled the spoiler." So the Saxons dealt with their Norman conquerors, as far as their power and opportunity permitted, and the Dutch and their Spanish conquerors, and the Sicilians with their French conquerors. Though there were dreadful excesses committed by both parties in the end, it is certain beyond controversy that the first aim of the Irish was to regain their own without any sacrifice of life. On the night of the rising, and during the six days that followed, only one man was killed; a fact which stamps with complete certainty their original purpose. When blood is shed it is like kindling the prairie; no one can any longer pretend to limit the devastation. But there were some signal instances of moderation; certain priests it is recorded concealed fugitives under their altars;\*

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\*Leland's *History of Ireland*. Leland was a Pro-

and a bishop of the Protestant Establishment, who had distinguished himself by humane conduct in his day of power, was permitted in the very focus of the insurrection, to fill his house with English settlers, and shelter them from all molestation. The contemporary accounts of the transaction are quite as untrustworthy as the narratives of *Titus Oates* and his confederates. The settlers depended absolutely on the support of England for maintaining their position. Many of them had suffered grievously, and the remainder were in danger of losing the fruit of all their toil and enterprise. What sort of stories they sent to Westminster under such circumstances, to inflame the zeal of their partizans, may be conceived. All Puritan England was ready to believe, and eager to hear, new marvels of Irish iniquity. Pious tears and rage were excited by a description of the hosts of murdered Protestants appearing in broad daylight, day after day, on the bridge of Portadown, wringing their hands and uttering piercing shrieks for an avenger. One peculiarly stubborn

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fessor of Trinity College, Dublin, and a Chaplain to the Lord-Lieutenant in the time of George III. The Scotch were treated with peculiar forbearance. The Irish made proclamation, on pain of death, that no Scotsman should be molested in body, goods, or lands.  
—Carte's *Ormond*, i., 178.

ghost held his ground for more than a month. A bishop was among the witnesses of these impressive facts; which exhibited, as one can conceive, heaven itself among the allies of the plantators. The theory finally adopted, by English and Anglo-Irish writers generally, with respect to this transaction, when the clouds of prejudice and misrepresentation were blown away, is perplexing to human reason. To seize the hereditary lands of the Irish race, and drive out the inhabitants from the pastoral valleys and rich alluvial plains which they and theirs had enjoyed since the dawn of history, was a wise stroke of statesmanship it seems; but to seize the same lands occupied for a single generation by English settlers, and drive out the inhabitants, in order to replace the original population in their own possessions, was a crime of incredible greed and cruelty. Fairly judged at this day, it must be admitted that the transfer of the land back to its original owners was made with as little premeditated violence as in any agrarian revolution with which it can be fairly brought into comparison. Bloody reprisals were the custom of the age. In the Netherlands, in Italy, and in France, the faction of the Catholics and the faction of the Reformers killed and ravaged without remorse. That a race whose chiefs had

been trapped like wild beasts, or assassinated in the very offices of hospitality, among whom the tragedy of the *Pacata Hibernia*, and the kindred tragedy of the Plantation were performed, should have been stung into no deadlier a humor will be for ever a marvel to men who have studied human history and human nature. The outrages shamefully exaggerated were no part of the original design. The rising when it fell under the guidance of Roger O'Moore, finally swelled into a revolution, had its parliament at Kilkenny to which Charles sent ambassadors, and its armies in the field, to which in the end, he would gladly have committed his cause, and conducted its measures with notable clemency and moderation.\*

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\* Unless on the hypothesis that there is a separate scheme of divine and human justice, and a separate law of nature, applicable to Ireland, it is difficult to account for the contradictory judgment which a man ordinarily so wise and just as Mr. Carlyle applies to nearly identical circumstances in Ireland and France. In Ireland the agricultural population driven wild by pillage and oppression, rose and repossessed themselves of lands recently taken from them, and in the process committed and endured cruel excesses: in France the agricultural population, also long oppressed and pillaged, rose and burned the chateaux of the noblesse, who had possessed them for centuries, killed the owners whenever they could find them, and when their partizans were in prison rose in conjunction with a city mob and murdered them in cold blood. Of the Irish transaction Mr. Carlyle has written a vehement and unmeasured

In the Irish Parliament called the Confederation of Kilkenny, the Catholics of both races were fully represented. Owen O'Neil, known in Irish annals as Owen Roe,\* a soldier who had acquired skill and experience in the armies of Spain, came to the aid of his countrymen. Throughout the war he exhibited sagacity, soldiership and patriotism, but he was constantly thwarted by the Anglo-Irish, who were more solicitous for the security of Charles than for the rights of the nation. It is the glory of Hampden and Falkland to have loved England better than they loved the king; and Owen Roe certainly loved Ireland better than he loved the king. The Pope sent a nuncio to aid the Irish with his advice, and with the nuncio came some help in money and arms. It is not necessary to follow through its varying fortunes a war which the Confederate Catholics maintained for six stormy years. They were fighting for freedom of conscience, as the Scots at the same time

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1649

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1645

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condemnation. Of the French massacre he says "Horrible in lands that had known equal justice. Not so unnatural in lands that had never known it. *Le sang qui coule est il donc si pur?* asks Barnave, intimating that the gallows though by irregular methods has its own."—Carlyle's *French Revolution*.

Before the close of the war Owen Roe suddenly died; poisoned, as it was somewhat rashly concluded. The age of poisoning was passed.

were fighting for it; as the Dutch, somewhat earlier had fought for it. They did not succeed in escaping from bondage, but the wrath of their keepers at the attempt deserves the sympathy of mankind in the same measure as the rage of a slave-driver whose tranquillity has been disturbed by unexpected resistance to the lash.

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1649

## SECTION X.

### CROMWELL.

When Charles was deposed and *executed*, Cromwell carried his victorious army across the Channel to conquer Ireland for the Commonwealth. His campaign was as coldly merciless as was Alva's in the Netherlands, or Carew's in Desmond. We are assured on high authority that he was in truth a humane and beneficent ruler, who only struck hard because it was necessary to execute divine justice on the authors of the Ulster rising. In pursuance of this meritorious policy he besieged Drogheda, which was held for the king, and put to the sword the entire garrison, and the population of all ages and both sexes, nobody being spared. The massacre continued for two days; it is admitted that between three and four thousand persons were butchered in cold blood; and a score or two of the inhabitants who alone escaped were sent as slaves to the tobacco plan-

tations. Among the garrison was an English regiment, commanded by an English Cavalier, and as Drogheda always lay within the English Pale, where the native Irish were long forbidden to inhabit a walled town, the traders and citizens were almost without exception Catholics of English blood. What Cromwell actually did was to kill certain Englishmen and Anglo-Irishmen in order to punish the offence of O'Neills and O'Reillys, Maguires and MacMahons. The account of the transaction which he sent to England was that it was a righteous judgment executed "on the barbarous wretches who had imbued their hands in so much innocent blood." He repeated this lesson of divine justice at Wexford. There the garrison and population were Irish, but Irish of the South; there is no reason to believe that it contained one soldier or citizen who had ever crossed the Boyne, or been any more associated with Sir Phelim O'Neill than with Praise God Barebones. The modern justification for these massacres is somewhat defective in its foundation of facts\*

A. D.  
1650 Cromwell was now undisputed master, and a period followed which we are exhorted to recognise as the sole era when an authentic God-

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\* See Cromwell's "Declaration for the undeceiving of deluded people," in a note at the end of the chapter.

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1654

given ruler made divine justice prevail in the land. Of his divine government of Ireland the naked facts are these: Two years after the war was at an end, and when the fighting men of Ireland to the number of 40,000 had been encouraged to take service with Spain, he drove out by beat of drum the entire Catholic population of *three provinces*, excepting only hinds useful to hold the plough or herd the flocks of the conqueror. Aged men and women, feeble and sickly persons, many who were protected by general treaties, others who were protected by special terms of submission, some who had received personal guarantees for personal services, were driven across the Shannon, to find a shelter if they could among the bogs of Connaught, and their lands divided among his soldiery. Peers and knights who had fought for the king, to whom they had sworn allegiance, were held by the representative of divine justice to have incurred this penalty. If they returned they became liable to be hanged without trial. Of the children of the poorer people, seized in a rape like Herod's, he caused 1,000 boys to be sold as slaves in the West Indies, and 1,000 innocent Irish girls to be sent to Jamaica, to a fate which would scarcely be adequately avenged if the authentic ruler spent an eternity in the re-

gion to which Cavalier toasts consigned him. The admitted aim of the Lord Protector was to extirpate the Irish race, and his policy is still known among them as the "Curse of Cromwell." If this be indeed the art of divine government, it was afterwards practiced more successfully in the *fusillades* and *noyades* of the French Jacobins, and in the Bulgarian atrocities painted by a modern statesman; and it reaches its perfection in the management of a prize by pirates, when the crew are made to walk the plank, and the booty distributed among the victors. Cromwell's conduct is still defended on the same fanatical pretences employed to justify the expulsion of the Huguenots from France, the Moors from Spain, the Jews from England, and the Christians from Japan, and the grounds are good for all these transactions, or for none of them.\*

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\* The difficulty of harmonising the opinion of the two nations, respecting representative men, is not less striking in this era than in any that preceded it. The inspired eyes which saw the heavens opened could discern nothing but evil in Irish Catholics fighting for liberty of conscience, or in Irish Presbyterians when they were troublesome to Cromwell. The author of "Robinson Crusoe," born to delight the youth of all nations, makes it a bitter reproach to Oliver that he abandoned the scheme he had under consideration to expel the whole Irish race from Ireland.

A. D.  
1660

## SECTION XI.

### BETRAYED HOPES.

Before Cromwell's policy was carried to complete success the Restoration brought back the Stuarts. Charles II. having compensated or reinstated a host of royalists ejected from their estates in England, turned his attention to Ireland. The enemies of his house were in possession of the lands confiscated under Cromwell, and the friends of his house, the original proprietors, who were the last to lay down arms for his father, some of whom had shared his own exile, were in penury and destitution. It was a case needing prompt handling, and Charles handled it with unusual promptitude. To pacify the Irish Puritans he confirmed the settlement of property under the Commonwealth. That is to say, Cromwell had given to his soldiers the estates of the Catholic gentlemen who had fought for the house of Stuart, and the restored house of

Stuart graciously confirmed the arrangement. Charles would probably have preferred doing justice, if justice could be done without much personal inconvenience. But he loved his harlots and jesters too well to run risks; and to do justice in this matter was made difficult by a sentiment always powerful in England; a sentiment which has created a perpetual barrier between the two nations, and which while it exists will never suffer them to unite. His English parliament, crowded with Cavaliers and returned exiles, would not have helped him to displace Englishmen, though they were Cromwellians, to make place for Irishmen, though they were Royalists. His impulse to do justice was at best not very strong; a slice of confiscated land remained at the disposal of the Crown, with which he might have made a provision for a few more of the worst cases of injustice; but his heart was touched with fraternal affection, and he gave the bulk of it—a hundred and seventy thousand acres and upwards—not to Irish sufferers, but to his brother James.\* Although the Cavalier

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\* There were nearly 8,000,000 acres to dispose of without interfering with Cromwellian occupation. Two millions and a quarter were given to Irish in possession, Irish of English descent, Irish declared innocent, or saved under provisions in the Act of Settlement; to English courtiers or soldiers there were given four mil-

parliament did not give back their estates to its Irish allies, it is needless to say that it did not quite overlook them. It compelled the king to withdraw a rash indulgence by which they were permitted to practice their religion. It passed a Test Act, by which no person could hold any office, civil or military, without subscribing a declaration against transubstantiation; and as bullocks from Meath and Kildare brought down the price of fat stock in the English market, it declared the importation of cattle from Ireland to be a public nuisance.

This was the reign of the “Merrie Monarch,” a time of national enjoyment and revelry in England, interrupted only by an English Popish plot and massacre, more deliberate and bloody than the plot and massacre in Ulster, over which history is so clamorous. The plot was the famous invention of *Titus Oates*; the massacre, the trial, conviction and murder of his victims for eighteen months; whose execution went on merrily long after judges and juries had ceased to believe a syllable of the evidence. If the Catholic king, who soon followed, had been strong and merciless as Cromwell, if he had

A. D.  
1678

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lions and a half. James got a great slice of the remainder. See Mr. Prendergast’s invaluable “Cromwellian Settlement.”

slaughtered the judges, juries, and spectators of this massacre, and their contemporaries indiscriminately for the offence of being alive at the period, if he had sent men in thousands to be slaves in the West Indies, and women to a worse fate, he would be qualified today, doubtless, to be recognized as a benevolent agent of Divine justice.

A. D.  
1688

## SECTION XII.

### BATTLE OF THE BOYNE.

When James II. embroiled himself with his English subjects by attempting to make changes by royal prerogative, which could only be legitimately made by Act of Parliament, he sought support in Ireland. The Irish never loved James, but his present offences were not such as could reasonably be expected to move their indignation. He was a Catholic, and he sought to extend religious liberty to Catholics and Dissenters. If his method was harsh and arbitrary, the boundaries of royal prerogative were ill-defined, and nations have never been slow to condone offences committed in their own interest. A little later the strictest Scottish Whigs forgave William for suspending laws by royal authority in Scotland; though suspending laws by royal authority was the offence for which his predecessor had been driven from the throne. James selected as Lord

Lieutenant in Ireland, Richard Talbot, the head of an Anglo-Norman house which still remained Catholic, created him Duke of Tyrconnell and gave him his confidence in a degree unusual to his frigid nature. Talbot is credited with a plentiful catalogue of vices by English writers. It is probable that he was boastful and profligate, and perhaps unveracious, but he was certainly bold, resolute and devoted to his master, and to the nation he was sent to rule. We must judge him by his age and his contemporaries. He was far from being so unscrupulous a partizan as Shaftesbury, the spokesman of resistance in England, and he was a generous and chivalrous gentleman compared to the hero of Blenheim and Malplaquet. When a conspiracy to bring in the Prince of Orange began to be talked of, Talbot disarmed a large number of Protestant gentlemen, whom he suspected of sympathy with William, and armed and regimented the native population whom he knew to be friendly to James. What else indeed was an agent of James to do? The Protestant gentry were for the most part heirs of Cromwellian settlers, and hated James as a Papist, and feared him as a king who might call in question their title to their estates. They themselves had taken much stricter precautions; when they were in power,

a Catholic was not permitted to possess the simplest weapon of defence; half-a-dozen Catholics meeting in Dublin or its neighborhood constituted an illegal assembly, and in country districts Catholics were not allowed to leave their parish except to attend the neighboring market. In periods of alarm the precaution has been taken by every Government in Ireland before and since; but so singular are the canons of criticism applicable to Irish affairs, that a noble historian who was a Cabinet Minister under Queen Victoria, when arms were taken from Munster Catholics and distributed among Ulster Orangemen, treats this precaution of Tyrconnell's as a grave and exceptional offence.

The principal employments, civil and military, in Ireland, were necessarily bestowed on native Catholics. "The highest offices of state, in the army, and in the Courts of Justice (groans Lord Macaulay) were with scarcely an exception filled by Papists."\* It was an intolerable grievance certainly, in a Catholic country, under a Catholic king who had only a handful of Protestant partizans in the island, that Catholics were so employed. To be sure, in England when James's opponents got the upper hand, the highest offices of state, in the army, and in the courts,

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\* Macaulay's "England," Vol. II., p. 70.

A. D.  
1689

without a single exception, were filled by Protestants, but that was "*bien different*." While the Prince of Orange, in correspondence with some of James's privy councillors and generals, was collecting on the coast of Holland an army of Dutch, French and German troops to invade his kingdom, the king summoned to his aid a portion of his army in Ireland, recruited like the army of his father in a large part from Irish Catholics. An army similarly recruited has since won memorable victories for England in Spain, Belgium, and France, in Africa, Asia and Australasia, but the proposal was received with a roar of indignation, and a deluge of libels. At the same time two Irish judges, one of them recognised even by unfriendly critics as the foremost man of his race, were sent to London to make certain representations respecting the condition of Ireland. These officials would have been received with distinction at Versailles or the Escuriel; in London the mob surrounded their carriage with burlesque ceremonies, among which potatoes stuck on white wands were conspicuous. The favorite jester of the present day, who ordinarily pictures an Irishman as a baboon or a gorilla, is scarcely more delightfully humorous; and the perversity of a people who do not love such charming pleasantries, has nat-

urally been the perplexity of English writers down to our own age.\*

James fled to France and left his enemies in possession of England and Scotland. In Ireland Tyrconnell held the country for the king, and sent him advice to head a French expedition to Dublin, where he would be loyally welcomed and reinstated in a kingdom. Louis XIV. gave him officers, arms, ammunition and a little money, but no soldiers; and with this poor provision he landed at Kinsale in the spring of 1689. The Irish received him in triumph; installed him in Dublin Castle, the traditional seat of author-

A. D.  
1690

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\* While James was meditating a flight to France, some good friend of the revolution indulged in a playful device of a more practical sort. A crowd of fugitives whose dress bespoke them ploughmen and labourers, rushed into London at midnight, shrieking the dreadful news that the Irish army were in full march on the city, burning and slaughtering women and children in their course. Letters containing horrible versions of this Popish atrocity were delivered in distant and widely sundered districts of the country at the same time. The citizens rose and armed in self-defence, and as no enemy appeared, they passed the time agreeably in sacking and burning the houses of Catholic gentlemen and tradesmen. The enemy never appeared, and the story turned out to be a pious fraud; a partisan of the Whigs afterwards claimed the merit of having schooled the shrieking fugitives with his own lips, and written the letters with his proper hand. As the Irish army committed no offence, London was naturally indignant with them for having given her so much trouble for nothing.

ity, and the best men of the race tendered him their service. A parliament was summoned. It necessarily consisted almost exclusively of Catholics. The Protestants elected amounted to about half a dozen. The Protestant peers who answered the king's summons reached about the same number, including three Protestant bishops; but small as the number was, it was certainly in excess of the proportion of Protestants in the country who supported James. The Government was also chiefly Catholic, though James had several English Protestants in his Cabinet, but they were necessarily the minority.\*

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\* Lord Macaulay is disgusted at the number of O'Neills and O'Donovans, MacMahons and Macnamaras who thronged the benches; a phenomenon as amazing as to see Russells and Stanleys, Smiths and Brownes, in the parliament of Westminster. Other modern writers have made the scanty representation of the minority a subject of reproach. How the Irish Catholics could have been so bigoted as to prefer entrusting their interests to men of their own race and faith is amazing, to writers of a nation who two centuries later, out of five hundred and fifty representatives of England, Scotland and Wales do not elect a single Catholic gentleman. The peculiar and exceptional law to which Irish transactions are supposed to be subject is a marvel. James took his government from the rank of his supporters for the most part. "It was now," says Lord Macaulay in a fine burst of indignation, "impossible to establish in Ireland a just and beneficent government; a government which should know no distinction of race or creed." This, it seems, was the sort of government which it was incumbent on

The Irish parliament of James has been a standing target for slander down to our own day. Suddenly called together among a people who had slight experience of parliamentary forms, and who had grievous wrongs to redress, they conducted themselves with singular moderation and good sense. They created an army and a navy, they established religious equality among all Christian creeds, they made vigorous efforts to foster native manufactures, and were the first to declare the fundamental doctrine which the English and the Irish parliaments reaffirmed a century later, that the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland were alone entitled to legislate for that country. This Catholic parliament did not pass any law inflicting penalties on Protestants for their opinions. Their fathers had been mercilessly persecuted by the Puritans;

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James to set up in Ireland in the seventeenth century. In England a different system of equity was doubtless proper, for the noble historian records with entire approval, that all James's appointments of Catholics to office were immediately cancelled by William and Mary, that English peers who had become Catholics were committed to the Tower for high treason, that before James had reached Calais the Popish priests were in exile or in prison, and no monk who valued his life dare show himself in the habit of his order, and that finally Irish soldiers were not permitted to remain in England; in short, that distinction of race and creed was the cardinal point on which the action of the administration in England turned.

they themselves and their children were soon to be mercilessly persecuted under a daughter of the king for whom they were in arms. Their fellow Catholics in England and Scotland at the moment were under proscription and persecution, but they set an example of moderation and forbearance nearly unique in history. The tithes paid by Protestants were ordered to be paid to the Protestant clergy, the tithes paid by Catholics to the Catholic clergy; an arrangement which bears a favorable comparison for substantial justice with a settlement of the same question made in our own day. They did not deprive Protestants of arms, or the franchise; they did not exclude them from parliament or the learned professions; they did not forbid them to acquire or inherit property, or to educate their children in their own faith, nor tempt them by bribes to conform to the religion of the majority. These were wrongs which they did not inflict, but which in the end they were destined to endure. It is true they restored to the lineal heirs the estates which Cromwell a generation before had taken from them. But they accompanied the measure with compensation to innocent persons. In restoring the estates they followed the example of the English parliament. Under Charles II. a few years before the estates

of bishops and chapters sold by the Long Parliament at fair market prices, were resumed without any compensation to the purchasers, and the bishops and chapters reinstated in them. When William was established in authority the same course was taken with the estates of Irish Catholics and Jacobites. It is indeed the course which any government or legislature in Europe at the period would have inevitably pursued. But in James and his Irish Parliament, it was a proceeding for which historical critics can find no conceivable excuse.

The Protestants naturally sided with William. It furnishes a significant commentary on the fatuity of human schemes that the towns and fortified places in Ulster, which James's grandfather had established to maintain his authority, were now strongholds of William. The gates which James I. raised at Derry, Coleraine, and Enniskillen, were shut in the face of James II. The transaction most honorable to the Protestant minority in all their annals is the fortitude with which they held Londonderry for more than three months against the arms of James. Neither the most painful destitution, nor the most favorable terms could shake their constancy.

Fighting under the feeble lead of James

A. D.  
June 30  
1690

the Catholics were defeated *at the Boyne*, by an army composed of veteran troops, Dutch, and French, who had served in William's continental wars, and the English Guards, accompanied by a handful of Irish Protestants. James fled to Dublin, and after brief delay back again to France. William got possession of Dublin and took immediate action to strengthen his position. The train bands of the capital were purged of all Papists, and it was ordered that only Protestants should be permitted to serve in them thereafter. This was a judicious precaution, and must not be confounded by a heedless reader with the action of Tyrconnell in disarming Protestants, which of course admits of no excuse. When James fled to France the Irish, disengaged of his timid and meddlesome counsels, stood gallantly at bay. The French officers recommended a capitulation, but they would not hear of submission. They maintained themselves for twelve months in Munster and Connaught against the skilful soldiership of William and Ginkel, till they were able to make an honorable *capitulation at Limerick*. The siege of that city is a story of gallantry and devotion embracing all classes and both sexes of the besieged. But the Irish annalists record with greatest pride an incident that marked its

close. before the city was actually delivered up the arrival of a long-promised expedition from France, with men, money and arms, was announced; but Patrick Sarsfield, who was in command, considered his honor and the honor of his race engaged in completing the capitulation, and completed it accordingly with a French fleet lying in Irish waters. The treaty of Limerick guaranteed the Catholics the same exercise of their religion, which they had enjoyed under Charles II., and the maintenance of property as it existed at the date of the instrument. The bulk of the Irish army withdrew to France with Sarsfield; a handful who remained, lived as disbanded soldiers have lived in every country, by scanty supplies from friendly natives, and predatory levies off unfriendly settlers. The new government gave them a fine lesson of humanity and moderation, for "every kern that was caught was hanged without ceremony on the nearest tree."



## SECTION XIII.

### ORANGE WILLIAM.

William's parliament took back the estates restored to the Irish owners, and reinstated the Cromwellian settlers or their heirs. If the reader desires to be in harmony with the verdict of English history on these transactions, he must be careful to discriminate, for that verdict is a little puzzling and contradictory. It was right under James I. to take away the land from the undoubted owners in Ulster, but it was an atrocious outrage for the owners or their heirs to reclaim it. It was right and righteous of Cromwell to confiscate two more provinces. It was politic and proper under Charles II. to confirm this new confiscation by his enemy (though the contrary course was taken at the same time in England) and it was shameful and even fraudulent in James's parliament to reinstate the original owners; but it would not at all have been wise

or proper for William to have followed the example of Charles II. and confirmed the settlement made by his predecessor. On the contrary, he was clearly bound to drive out the owners once again. If a reason why be demanded, the reader is to understand that the improvements made by the English settlers created a title superior to the original ownership. They claimed by the right of a higher civilization—a plea which, if it be good, would justify Paris in seizing upon London, and London in seizing upon Liverpool or Glasgow. But he must not fall into the error of supposing that if the Puritan settlement in Ulster or Munster had been a French settlement in the weald of Kent, or if the chances of war had enabled Baron Haussman to plant boulevards and open a Rue de Dorking in Westminster, that the principle would be applicable in such cases. It is only in force in Ireland.

The treaty of Limerick guaranteed to the Catholics advantages which can scarcely be considered excessive. They were to retain such estates as they possessed before James II. came to the throne, and to enjoy the exercise of their religion as fully as they had enjoyed it under his brother; but when the flower of the Irish army had withdrawn into France, and the remnant could be

hanged without ceremony, the concession began to look excessive and even inordinate. The parliament of Cromwellian settlers in Dublin first passed a stringent statute depriving the Catholics of arms, and another ordering all "Popish archbishops, bishops, vicars-general, deans, jesuits, monks, friars, and regulars of whatever condition to depart from the kingdom on pain of transportation" and then proceeded to consider the treaty. They resolved by a decisive majority not to keep the condition affecting the Catholics. William, who had signed the articles of surrender with his own hand, struggled for a time to preserve his honor; but it is not convenient for a new king to be in conflict with his friends, and after a time he gave way. If the laws of public morality were not as we know suspended in the case of Ireland, the house of Nassau would lie under another imputation in this business, not less dishonoring than the judicial murder of John de Barneveld or the massacre of the MacDonnells of Glencoe.\*

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\* For more than a century the violation of the treaty of Limerick was as common a reproach to England on the Continent, as the partition of Poland has been a reproach to Russia in our own day. It will not be necessary, however, to have recourse to the censure of foreign critics or the recrimination of plundered Catholics to understand the transaction. An Act of Parliament was passed, styled "An Act to confirm the Arti-

Had this transaction happened in France, and the wrong been inflicted on the Huguenots, it is not improbable that the critics who have taught us to abhor the bad faith of the Bourbons and Bonapartes, would have discovered another suitable text for moral indignation. But the ordinary English reader has not heard much of the capitulation of Limerick. Still less does he know that the disregard of public faith carried its punishment along with it; of which he has not

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cles of Capitulation at Limerick," and its character is described in a Parliamentary record of permanent authority. The more moderate of the conquerors, and some malcontents who got none of the plunder, made a stand for public justice, and having failed to amend the bill, entered a protest on the journals of the House of Lords signed by ten peers and four bishops of the Irish Establishment. This document declares that not one of the articles agreed upon between the King and Sarsfield was fully confirmed; that while it was the manifest intention of the treaty that they should be confirmed in favour of those to whom they were granted, the pretended confirmation placed the Catholics "in a worse position than they occupied before." That words were inserted in the Act which were not in the Articles, and material words in the Articles were omitted from the Act, whereby their meaning and intention were altered. That one important clause which affected the liberty and property of the Catholics was altogether omitted. And as this anxiety about justice to conquered Catholics might seem a little unreasonable and ill-timed, the protest terminated by declaring that certain Protestants who had purchased property, or accepted mortgages, on the faith of the Articles, would be seriously injured by the breach of public faith committed in the measure.

altogether escaped a share in permanent public taxes. The bigotry which by revoking the Edict of Nantes drove an army of skilled artizans out of France, did not prove a more disastrous blunder, than the bigotry which by repudiating the articles of Linierick drove a hundred and fifty thousand Irishmen into the armies of France during three generations; soldiers who under Louis le Grand and the first Napoleon baffled the policy of England, and changed the history of the world at Kontenoy and Austerlitz. The names of great Irish soldiers emblazoned on the walls of Versailles, among "*les officiers généraux morts pour la France*," and of statesmen and diplomatists buried in cathedrals and colleges from Vienna to Madrid, and of a host of less conspicuous names carved in cloisters and vaults in Rome, Louvain, Douai and Valladolid, represent a formidable force transformed by bad faith into irreconcilable enemies.



**A. D.**  
**1702**

## SECTION XIV.

### THE PENAL LAWS.

When Anne succeeded William the minor provisions of the treaty, spared in the first instance, were one after another set aside by law. The Catholics were reduced to a condition closely resembling the bondage which black slaves endured in the southern States of America. They were excluded from Parliament, from the magistracy, from the army, navy and public service, from the bar, and finally from juries, and from the franchise, all of which they had possessed under Charles II. The nobility and gentry in general sought a career in Catholic states ; the class who remained in Ireland and the children they reared were disabled from disturbing the supremacy of the conquerors by being reduced not merely to poverty but to the worse bondage of ignorance. Education was forbidden. To become teacher in a Catholic school or tutor in a Catholic family

was a felony. To establish or endow a Popish school was strictly prohibited, and no Papist could become an usher in a Protestant school. Many youths were sent to foreign colleges, and to check this abuse Catholics were forbidden to leave the country under heavy penalties.

Religion was more fiercely repressed. That no more priests might be ordained, all bishops were banished; and with them all the religious orders. To return, or to introduce any foreign priest, was made a capital offence. The secular priests already in Ireland, were permitted to remain on obtaining a license from the Government, but after a little this permission was subjected to the impossible condition of swearing that the Pope had no spiritual authority in Ireland. The means of necessary self-defence were taken away. Catholics were deprived of arms, and excluded from the militia; but a paternal sovereign enabled them to participate in the patriotic services of this force by paying twice as much as Protestants towards its support. They could not build or arm vessels of war for the defence of their coasts; but if the Pretender or any Catholic prince invaded them, the duty of making good the injury inflicted was assigned exclusively to them. They were forbidden to purchase or inherit land, or to hold it

as lessees, except on a limited and imperfect tenure. Children were encouraged to become informers against their parents, by [a] right of succession granted to any child of a Catholic who conformed to the State Church; the betrayal of a Popish father or guardian being in the eyes of Parliament equivalent to baptism and confirmation.] If none of the children conformed the estate at least was broken up; on the owner's death it was divided among his sons in equal parts. The bulk of the nation were from that time a sort of tenants-at-will in their own country. But it is easier to enact a penal law than to enforce it. A few Catholics saved their estates by the aid of Protestant friends, for to the credit of human nature there were always individuals more generous than the law. Priests and teachers were still found to brave all penalties, bourses were established in foreign colleges for Irish students, and the law was not always strictly enforced.

The Puritans hated the natives with the same pious scorn with which the Castilian hated the Moor, and they were encouraged to indulge this passion without stint; but otherwise they were treated as mere dependents by the Crown. The population, whether Cromwellians or Catholics, were subject to the rule which long prevailed in

all British possessions throughout the world, that the dependent state only existed for the benefit of the paramount state. If they wove their wool into broadcloth, they were not allowed to carry the fabric to any market but England. If they preferred to sell the raw material they were not allowed to sell it in any market but England. They smuggled it a good deal to France and Spain, and their lawlessness has not escaped bitter reproach; but they still find apologists in Ireland who insist that a bench of bishops, or the twelve apostles, would have smuggled under the circumstances.

The Protestants of the capital, who were of the religion of the court, and the Protestants of the Plantation, who were for the most part Presbyterians or Puritans, agreed ill. The courtiers detested the perversity which rejected bishops and deans, and might, it was suspected, on slight provocation, come to reject kings and nobles. The Established Church denied the validity of their marriages, constantly troubled them in the exercise of their faith, and deprived them by Episcopalian tests of a fair share in the ascendancy they had helped to win. The planters who had long kept watch and ward against the "mountainy men" despised the worldlings who spent their lives in witnessing stage plays and un-

godly dances, or in intriguing for employment and favor in the Castle yard; and were never sorry to see Church or king in a little trouble.

Among the Catholics there was no national literature; no books of any kind indeed except a few pamphlets written by Irish priests or exiles on the Continent, and smuggled into the country. But an injured people have a long memory. By the fireside on a winter night, at fairs and markets, the old legends and traditions were a favorite recreation. The wandering harpers and pipers kept them alive; the itinerant schoolmaster taught them with more unction than the rudiments. Nurses and seamstresses, the tailor who carried his lapboard and shears from house to house, and from district to district, the pedlar who came from the capital with shawls and ribbons, the tinker who paid for his supper and shelter with a song or a story, were always ready with tales of the wars and the persecution. A recent historian, already quoted, cannot repress his disdain that in those times—for this was “the Augustan age of Queen Anne”—no great drama or epic poem or masterpiece of art was produced in Ireland; but it is not on the gaolers in this penal settlement, but on their prisoners that the critic’s reproaches fall.

Under the House of Hanover the penalties got

**A. D.** gradually modified. The Irish Catholics took no part in the risings in favor of the Pretender; the memory of the Stuarts was stained with bad faith and selfishness, and of all the Stuarts James was the most odious; but though quiet at home their exiles had recently won the battle of Fontenoy, and it was discreet to tolerate them a little. Priests who could furnish the surety of two free-holders for their peaceful conduct, and did not outrage good taste by showing themselves in public, were permitted to perform their functions in bye streets, and back places. Provided always that they were careful to ring no bell, and erect no steeple, these indulgences being absolutely incompatible with the safety of Church and throne.

The policy of the Penal Laws, it must be admitted, was entirely successful. There remained a Catholic people, but no Catholic nation. A host of historical families disappeared, and the few Catholic peers and gentry who retained some fragment of their ancient property, were never heard of outside their demesnes. A hundred years after the battle of Aughrim a Catholic merchant pleading for Emancipation, declared that there was no longer any reason to fear a claim to the forfeited estates, as the descendants of the ancient possessors had sunk into the dregs

of the people and were laborers in the fields or porters on the quays of Dublin, or beggars in the streets unable to read or write, or prove their legitimacy, or trace a pedigree.\* No institution remained to hold together the fragment of the Irish race except the national Church, which had braved constant persecution, and the humiliation which is harder to bear than persecution, to watch over its flock. The Catholics, like the Jews, excluded from political life, threw their energy into trade, and a race of successful merchants at length arose, who began in the time of George III. to make some claim to their natural rights. Their claims got listened to by statesmen and thinkers, but made no impression on the mass of English opinion, till circumstances forced upon the Government the necessity of bidding for their sympathy. When the American colonists took up arms it was noted that Irish Catholics, and still more Irish Presbyterians, were conspicuous among their leaders. There had been a constant stream of emigration from Ireland to North America for three generations; a movement probably destined to influence the course of its history, in the end, as decisively as the sailing of the Mayflower. After

A. D.  
1776

\* Speech of John Keogh at a Catholic meeting in Fishamble Street Theatre, March 23, 1792.

a time the ominous words were uttered in the London parliament, "America has been lost through the Irish," as a warning that Ireland might be lost by the same agency, and they marvellously stimulated the sense of justice among politicians.

The Irish of English descent, though they enjoyed a monopoly of power and patronage, had also grounds of discontent. Their manufactures were deliberately extinguished by the English Parliament in the interest of Yorkshire, and they had been wounded in their pride worse than in their interest. Their Parliament in Dublin could initiate no business that was not previously sanctioned by the English Privy Council, and was no better than a utensil for the minister in London. They had not been permitted to forget that these were oppressions, and that for such oppression there was a remedy. Swift in an anonymous pamphlet\* taught their ancestors the doctrine obvious enough now, but startling in those days, that they were entitled to enjoy without exception all the rights possessed by Englishmen in England. A reward for the discovery of the traitor who broached so dangerous a sedition was offered in the Dublin *Gazette*, but no one

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\* Dean Swift's period of influence was from 1714 to 1727.

dare betray the Dean. The philosopher Molyneux formulated the same claim, in a famous treatise, which was duly burned in Palace Yard by order of the House of Commons in London. *Lucas*, a vigorous demagogue, who believed in popular liberty provided it was restricted to good Protestants, reiterated this doctrine in the Irish House of Commons, and had to fly from the wrath of the authorities on Cork Hill. The American contest turned a vague sentiment into a purpose and a passion. The coast of Ireland facing the Atlantic was swept by privateers bearing the flag of the United Colonies, and Paul Jones in their name carried off a prize in the narrow sea between Ireland and Scotland. The Irish Executive were unprepared and helpless.\* They could only furnish "a troop or two of horse, and part of a company of invalids" to defend Belfast, lying dangerously near to the last adventure, and they were compelled to allow that vigorous town to defend itself. They sanctioned the formation of a Volunteer corps for the protection of the northern coast, in which a landing had been successfully effected by the French less than twenty years before. The example spread rapidly over all Ireland, and the Protestant

Previously  
A. D.  
**1698**

A. D.  
**1741**

A. D.  
**1779**

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\* The test act was passed in 1778, which gave to Catholics the right to lease land for 999 years.

ant peers and gentlemen who were then supreme, soon found themselves at the head of fifty thousand troops, clothed, armed and disciplined without assistance from the State. Citizen soldiers speedily came to have clear convictions on citizens' rights. It was such a native army which had enabled the American colonists to assert themselves, and gave solid weight to their opinions. The example was irresistible. A convention of Volunteer officers held in the Protestant church at Dungannon, pronounced that no power on earth save their own King, Lords and Commons had any right to make laws for the Irish people. And they brought the force of the whole nation in support of their contention, by declaring at the same time for the immediate emancipation of the Catholics. In the Irish Parliament there were many men of experience and ability, and happily one man of genius and supreme patriotism. Henry Grattan, then in his 36th year, son of the Recorder of Dublin, by education and connections a Whig, invited Parliament itself to affirm the principle of independence proclaimed at *Dungannon*. Parliament assented in a delirium of enthusiasm of which the whole nation partook. Free trade was next proclaimed, to the destruction of the sacred right of England to buy, sell and carry for the Irish.

A. D.  
1782

George III. would have treated these proceedings as naked rebellion a little earlier; but the recognition of a new Republic beyond the Atlantic, was a lesson which penetrated even the dense prejudice of the king; and happily at the moment, he had Charles James Fox among his advisers. The Lord Lieutenant was instructed to confirm the declaration of independence; but the Irish leaders to avoid future complications required the English Parliament to become a party to the resolution by renouncing forever all claim to legislate for Ireland. The English Parliament noting the temper of the Volunteer army, and pondering doubtless on the stripes and stars which had so lately won a place in the heraldry of nations, accordingly resolved—"That it is the opinion of this House that the Act of the 6th of George I., entitled 'an Act for the better securing the dependency of Ireland upon the Crown of Great Britain,' ought to be repealed."

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it was Catholic soldiers and statesmen who had kept alive the sentiment of nationality; this last victory was won exclusively by Protestant patriots.\*

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\* The idea of a National Guard in France is said to have been taken from these Irish Volunteers of 1782.

He appeared in 1806 to present an address in favor

Ireland had now a free Parliament which understood her interests, and greatly promoted her material prosperity. But in temper and prejudice it resembled an old Parliament of the Pale; its magnates being for the most part men who inherited the forfeited estates and who lived in mortal fear of a French invasion. This Parliament refused to strengthen itself by admitting the Catholics to representation, or even to widen its bases by giving all Protestants the franchise. The Volunteers who had inspired it with courage to assert independence, attempted by a new convention to compel it to accept reform. But Lord Charlemont, the commander of the citizen army, a great noble and a man of thought and culture, was timidous and punctilious, and at the last moment he shrank from the experiment. The people lost confidence in the Volunteers, and the Government felt it safe to disband them.

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of Catholics to the king. His declining health was regretted by O'Connell in 1808, as an argument, which, had he been present, would have united Catholic opinion.

A. D.  
1763  
1798

## SECTION XV.

### “UNITED IRISHMEN” AND “98.”

The Northern reformers, aided by some of the Presbyterian clergy, determined to bring other pressure on the sluggish Parliament, and a political organization with the significant title of the United Irishmen was founded at Belfast. *Wolfe Tone*, a young Protestant barrister of great determination of character, and endowed with winning manners, and a remarkable faculty for organization, was the founder of this society; he extended it to Dublin and managed to bring the leading Catholics of the metropolis into connection with it. His ideal was, as the title indicates, a union of the whole Irish people without local or religious distinction. A Catholic association maintained chiefly by Dublin traders, and led by John Keogh, a merchant, who matched the Handcocks and Carrolls of Maryland in brains and courage, exercised influence throughout the island. The English Government alarmed, as some of their successors have been alarmed at

A. D.  
1795

the conjunction of North and South, made some concessions to the Catholics. They were admitted to the franchise, and to the liberal professions, but still excluded from the corporations, the magistracy, and Parliament; and the schools maintained by the State were still exclusively schools for proselytism. A Lord Lieutenant, Lord Fitzwilliam, was sent over who desired to treat the bulk of the nation fairly, but he was required to perform the impossible task of carrying out his policy through agents to whom it was odious, and the experiment was hastily abandoned. English critics in those days expressed the same sagacious wonder which we have witnessed in our own time, that the Catholics were not content and thankful with this pitiful fragment of their rights; as if men are ever content with being cheated; but the Lord Lieutenant warned the Prime Minister in private, that half measures must necessarily produce dissatisfaction, “to make a reservation,” he said, “is to leave a splinter in the wound.”\*

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\* Lord Fitzwilliam to the Duke of Portland.

## SECRET SOCIETIES.

The French Revolution, which seemed destined to conduct mankind to happier and nobler regions of existence, rendered the United Irishmen impatient of delay and hopeless of appeals to a stubborn oligarchy. They transformed their society into a secret conspiracy to break the connection with England, and establish an Irish Republic. The society had now at its head a son of the Duke of Leinster, a nephew of the Duke of Richmond—Lord Edward Fitzgerald—and a number of young men of good family or good professional position, and among its allies and sympathizers the heirs of several peers and commoners of large property. Grattan, Curran and the leaders of the national party in Parliament held aloof, but Parliament by its obduracy had so disappointed them that they did not withhold their sympathy. The Government afterwards strove to connect Grattan with the conspiracy, but failed; Curran was less cautious. Charles Hamilton Teeling, in his venerable age, told me

that in '97, when he was a United Irishman and a young leader of the Ulster Catholics, Curran meeting him in College Green took him under the colonnade of the Parliament House and whispered reproachfully, "*When* will you begin, *when* will you begin?"\*

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\* What the Catholics could furnish to the enterprise was fighting men, and a few middle-class leaders. The remnant of their nobility and gentry were more alarmed at revolution than the Government itself; the young men of spirit or intellect among them had sought a career on the Continent, and the clergy, who had barely a legal existence, were in general only anxious to perform their duties without attracting notice.

A returned exile occasionally reminded them of what they had once been. Lord Taaffe, who had served with distinction in Austria both as a soldier and a diplomatist, visited Ireland during the era of independence. The minister of Austria, who was naturally received as an equal by the ministers of England, saw with shame and scorn his countrymen disciplined to regard themselves as an inferior race, because they professed the faith, whose servants he was accustomed to see occupy the foremost place in Courts and Councils of State. The feelings which this strange spectacle begot in a Count of the Holy Roman Empire, he strove, not entirely without success, to communicate to his own order and to the growing middle class in Dublin. Lord Trimblestone, another Catholic peer, reared in the Court of Versailles and driven home by the French Revolution, succeeded Lord Taaffe as temporary leader or spokesman of the Catholics. But he was strangely out of unison with the spirit of the epoch. While Europe was shaken by the new doctrines proclaimed from the ruins of the Bastile, and the Catholics were dreaming of complete religious and national freedom, he is described by a competent critic as exhibiting the demeanor and holding the principles of an emigre of the army of Conde.

Keogh, the leader of the Catholics, was not averse to the designs of the United Irishmen. He was cautious as beseemed the guardian of a defeated cause, but he was in communication with *Tone* (who indeed was secretary to the Catholic Committee, although a Protestant), and it was well understood that any rational enterprise for liberty would have his active aid. The result bitterly disappointed the hopes of the nation. The conspiracy was betrayed, the leaders seized and imprisoned, and a rising in Ulster, where a handful of Presbyterian and Catholic farmers fought two battles with the king's troops, speedily suppressed. A French invasion was still expected, however; it was rumored that young General Bonaparte, or young General Hoche, who was more highly esteemed at that period, would lead it, and it became the policy of the Government to compel the disaffection to explode before foreign assistance could arrive. The County of Wexford, where the United Irishmen had no organization, was goaded into insurrection by brutal severities directed against Catholics. The peasantry rose, placed at their head half unwilling Protestant squires of no military training, armed themselves with such weapons as they could seize or fabricate, and under these disadvantageous conditions

A. D.  
1798

won a success which nearly rendered the experiment of the Government fatal to the English interest. Two rural parishes, where the chapels had been burnt by yeomen, turned out under the command of their priests, swept the British troops out of all the strongholds in the county, and one or two of the young farmers who acted as their aides-de-camp were so fit for their work that they afterwards rose to distinction in the armies of Napoleon. Had a fourth of Ireland followed the example of Wexford, there would probably have been a revolution; but the Wexford men were unsupported, and after a campaign like that which was fought for the Bourbons in La Vendee, were finally defeated. A little later a French expedition procured, and accompanied, by Wolfe Tone landed in the West, but it was too feeble in number for its purpose, and it arrived when the contest was at an end. Then came the courts martial, the hangman, and the savage excesses of troops taught to regard the campaign as a religious war. For the landlords, alarmed for their estates, had appealed to the fear of Popery, which it is never difficult to awaken in men of British descent, and the Orange Society was founded in '75, ostensibly to retain the Catholics in subjection, but really to avoid a revolution in which the estates got by the

sword might be lost by the sword. The cruelties which made the name of Cumberland a sound of horror to the Scottish nation half a century before, were repeated by Carhampton in Ireland in 1798. These memories are painful and revolting, but who can blot them out? As long as the breast of an Englishman will glow with just pride as he reads of Crecy, or Agincourt, the Nile or Waterloo, so long the heart of an Irishman will be disturbed by agony and wrath over the desolation of Desmond, the spoliation of Ulster, and the brutalities of Carhampton.\*

It is not necessary to relate here in detail, as the subject will reappear necessarily more than once, how Pitt seized the opportunity of public calamity and panic to carry a measure, the bare proposal of which would have endangered the British connection half a dozen years before. By the stern suppression of opinion and the profligate purchase of votes, he carried the Legislative Union

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\* When the organisation of the Protestant peasantry by the small squires commenced, Cromwell was their model. The Catholics, in many districts in Ulster, were ordered to take themselves off immediately "to hell or Connaught." When they were unwilling or slow in their submission, wrecking and house-burning goaded them into alacrity. It is computed that from the County of Armagh seven thousand Catholics were driven out during the years 1795-6. From this wrecking came the battle of the Diamond and the creation of the Loyal Orange institution.

with England, and the national Parliament of Ireland came to an end. To mitigate the opposition of the Catholics, Pitt privately communicated to their leaders that the British Parliament would grant them the Emancipation which the Parliament in Dublin had persistently denied. Pitt who was not a bigot, who had allied England with the Catholic states of the Continent against France, and who was defending the Empire with an army in a large part Catholic, intended to perform all he promised, but when the time to perform came, George III. interposed the same stupid resistance which had lost America; and Pitt yielded his convictions and his plighted word to the fanaticism of the imbecile old King.\*

The venality of this parliament has been a standing reproach to Ireland; and it is considered an effectual answer to her claims to govern herself that when she had the opportunity of

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\* Another promise which heralded the Union was that the public employments of the empire, civil and military, should be thrown open to Irishmen. Lord Colchester, a Tory and a bitter opponent of Catholic Emancipation, describes one feeble attempt to keep the promise. The Lord Lieutenant (Lord Hardwicke) desired to obtain some military patronage to be distributed among Irishmen; but the Duke of York resisted, and he never obtained a single ensigncy for any Irishman whom he recommended (1801).—Lord Colchester's "Diary," Vol. I., p. 278.

electing a legislature, she chose one which sold her liberties without shame. The purchased parliament, which declined to reform itself, consisted of 300 members, among whom were 100 place-men, subject not to Ireland but to the British crown, and 100 nominees sitting for close boroughs and close counties, the creatures of a few peers, and great proprietors inheriting the confiscated estates. And in this parliament only a bare majority was obtained for the Union. The Catholics constituted four-fifths of the nation, and among the 300 members, there was not one Catholic. The traffic was shameful; but those who are familiar with the career of Walpole and the Pelhams, may reasonably inquire, if corruption is to disfranchise a people forever, whether there might not be found other nations who have forfeited their right to parliamentary institutions.



A. D.  
1800

## SECTION XVI.

### THE ACT OF UNION.

The Irish were at last—so it was proclaimed—admitted to perfect brotherhood. It is a curious phenomenon that each change which England meditated was sweetened by a general admission of past transgressions. Sir John Davies confessed with charming frankness that up to the coming of James I. the Irish were naturally and inevitably enemies of the English Crown, from the treatment they had received. And now Pitt summed up the history of the connection in a pregnant sentence, “England,” he declared, “had contrived to deprive Ireland of the use of her own revenues, and render her subservient to British interests and opulence.” But the Union would set these wrongs forever right. How far it set them right, no one is ignorant. Thenceforth the Irish people sent representatives to the great senate of the Empire, and were in full enjoyment of

British liberty; if British liberty consists in being heard with visible impatience, and peremptorily outvoted, on every national question, by a majority who do not trouble themselves to listen to the debate.

A. D.  
1803

After the Union Robert Emmet, the boy brother of one of the United Irish leaders, and Thomas Russell, the bosom friend of Wolfe Tone, attempted a new insurrection, but it was inadequately supported; they fell into the hands of the British Government, and were added to the long list of martyrs for Irish liberty.

The Catholics under John Keogh kept alive their organization and their hopes notwithstanding the duplicity of Pitt. Between the Revolution of '88 and the American war Protestants, however, distinguished for patriotism or benevolence, had been implacable in their hostility to Catholics. Neither Swift nor Berkeley, Flood nor Charlemont proposed to extend the Irish liberty which they desired beyond the pale of the minority. Since 1782, however, a constantly increasing number of Protestants were eager to see the emancipation of the Catholics completed; but the bulk of those in possession of the monopolies still hated the race which put them in peril with the merciless hatred that a tyrant feels towards the slave who conspires for deliverance

The credit of those who strive and suffer is commonly swallowed up in the credit of those who succeed; and the Irish Catholics are scarcely aware how much they owe to John Keogh. He organised the country so effectually that a Lord Lieutenant warned a Secretary of State, that this Dublin merchant was exercising the highest functions of Government, levying contributions which were promptly paid, and issuing orders which were cheerfully obeyed. And Edmund Burke forgot the cares of empire to exchange encouragement and council with the committee guided by Keogh; for the Irish cause, which is a jest to the English Philistine, exercised an irresistible fascination over the mind of Burke, as it exercised an irresistible fascination over the minds of Grattan, Sheridan and Canning. A struggle protracted through all the years of his manhood, many bitter disappointments, and probably the unconscious influence of age, at length lowered Keogh's hopes, and he recommended a policy of delay and quiescence. But the new generation, the Young Ireland of that era, represented by a vigorous lawyer in the flush of manhood, was impatient of delay. O'Connell to his latest day was fond of describing the Catholic conference where Keogh counselled a "dignified repose," and where he, the representative of the

coming time, followed, and not opposing or controverting what the venerable patriot had recommended, but treating his suggestion with infinite respect, caused an exactly opposite course to be adopted by the meeting. But though the Catholics met and debated, it was a quarter of a century after the Union before the Association which finally won emancipation was founded. That body which grew from slight beginnings gradually drew into its bosom the Catholic nobility, the Catholic clergy, who became its devoted agents, the middle class, and finally the whole Catholic people. Richard Sheil excited public spirit from the tribune of the Corn Exchange—its ordinary place of meeting—by a passionate persuasive rhetoric, which afterwards swayed a less sympathetic audience in Westminster, and Wyse, Woulfe and others were busy in its counsels. But O'Connell was its life and soul. All the leisure which could be stolen from a professional life engrossed by profitable business was given to the Association. Projects which had been tried and abandoned by the Catholics before, were taken up anew, and patiently worked out to practical success. Catholic rent was universally collected by Catholic churchwardens, and local disputes were settled by umpires, appointed by the Association.

A. D.  
1775  
1847

There was only one class over whom the influence of the Protestant gentry was still supposed to be supreme, the tenants at will. For the condition of a tenant at will made submission a necessity, almost a duty. In Ulster the Scotch settlers had obtained, and their descendants had jealously preserved, certain obvious rights, such as the right to enjoy undisturbed possession while they paid a reasonable rent, of the houses they built, and the farms they fenced and improved. But the descendants of the original owners of the land had no such rights; they held on a tenure the like of which was elsewhere unknown to human law. When they were accepted as tenants on confiscated estates, after the supply of strangers was exhausted, they had often been put into possession of land left as bare as the great desert by civil war; and the houses they built, the fences they erected, and the trees they planted became immediately, under a law made for their behoof, the property of the land-owner. Swift in his semi-ironical way recommended a parson whose church was dilapidated to give it to the Papists, and when they had repaired it he might take it back. The landlord improved on this hint; he hired naked land to the Papists, and when they had put it in working order took it back at his discretion. When-

ever a farm became valuable by the labor of the tenant, it was a common practice to give him the choice to pay an increased rent, or to turn out. The tenant commonly had no resource but to accept the landlord's terms; for the population had nearly doubled since the Union, and the decay of trade and commerce threw the whole people upon agriculture. Extortionate rents were paid or promised (for they were often intentionally fixed at an impossible amount to ensure submission in other respects), and the tenants were in consequence poorer, worse clad, worse fed, and worse housed, than the people of any civilized country in the world. It was this class so opposed and degraded who were destined to win the final victory. At the general election of 1826 three counties, where the landlords had been supreme since the Revolution, elected candidates favored by the Association. The forty-shilling freeholders, often day laborers, holding patches of land, or a cottage and garden, at best small farmers, whose votes had been exacted as punctually as their rent, voted for emancipators. In Monaghan they defeated the Blayneys and Shirleys, in Louth the Jocelyns and Fosters, and in Waterford ejected a member of the predominant house of Beresford, which

up to that time had held Ireland in its grasp, as the Dundasses held Scotland.\*

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\* Thomas Wyse.



A. D.  
1828

## SECTION XVII.

### CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION.

These successes encouraged the Association to a bolder step, and two years later they determined to procure the election of a Catholic, who was by law declared incapable of sitting or voting. The choice naturally fell on O'Connell, whose name would excite the widest enthusiasm. *He stood for Clare* against a member of the Wellington Government. The gentry to a man, whether for or against Emancipation, fought a desperate battle for their long established authority. The forty-shilling freeholders of nearly every parish in the county, with the priest at the head of his congregation, marched to the hustings and voted for O'Connell. It would have required less courage to have gone into battle, than to defy the agent and the driver armed with ejectments, who stood by taking note of the delinquency. But a pitched battle could not yield

more decisive results than this contest; it was the proximate cause of emancipation.

A. D.  
1829

The Catholics were at length emancipated in 1829 by an act which instituted a new oath, and gave new liberties to Catholics. It admitted them to all offices, civil and military, those of Viceroy and Lord Chancellor excepted. But it raised the franchise to £10, thus depriving of a vote all the 40s. freeholders, who were the main reliance of the Catholic party, and to whom O'Connell mainly owed his election. Ten years later, the Municipal Reform Act was passed, giving Catholics the right to hold certain municipal offices, as that of mayor and town councillor, and allowing them to vote for such officers. The appointment of the sheriff was reserved to the Lord Lieutenant.

And now surely they would be contented and grateful for evermore? Perverse must the people be who, having got what they asked, are not satisfied. Let us see. What they asked was to be admitted to their just share, or, at any rate, to some share, of the government of their native country, from which they had been excluded for five generations. But on the passing of the Emancipation Act a single Catholic was not admitted to any office of authority, great or small. The door was opened, indeed, but not a soul was

permitted to pass in. There were some murmurs of discontent, and the class who still enjoyed all the patronage of the State, the Church, the army, the magistracy, and the public service, demanded if there was any use in attempting to conciliate a people so intractable and unreasonable?\* The Catholic Association, which had won the victory, was rewarded for its public spirit by being dissolved by Act of Parliament. Its leader, who had been elected to the House of Commons, had his election declared void by a phrase imported into the Emancipation Act for this special purpose. The forty-shilling free-holders, whose courage and magnanimity had made the cause irresistible, were immediately deprived of the franchise. By means of a high qualification and an ingeniously complicated system of registry, the electors in twelve counties were reduced from upwards of a hundred thousand to less than ten thousand. Suppose the Anti-Corn-Law League, when it won a vic-

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\* More than a generation before Catholics had been made eligible to serve on juries, but in some counties during the whole period a Catholic was never admitted to serve on a trial where the prisoner was a Catholic. They had been declared competent to hold leases, but no leases were forthcoming when they asked for them. In all these cases it was deemed sufficient to admit the principle, and highly ungrateful and unreasonable of the Catholics to ask any more.

tory not more salutary, had been ignominiously suppressed; that Free Trade, though conceded in principle, had been rendered inoperative in action; that Manchester and Bradford, Rochdale and Staleybridge, had been disfranchised by Act of Parliament, and Richard Cobden studiously insulted in the statute that established the principles for which he had contended, the result of the victory would scarcely have been universal contentment and gratitude among the manufacturers of England.

But at least the intention and *animus* of this great act of justice ought to be recognised, which English statesmen had the courage to concede without the consent, and probably against the wishes, of the English people? Emancipation could not have been carried through parliament if there were not a body of public men there eager to see justice done because it was justice, and outside a corps of publicists who had prepared the public mind of the middle class to accept it. But the motives of the proposer were widely different. The Duke of Wellington explained himself explicitly to his colleagues, and especially to his royal master. He did not ask him to yield, that justice might be accomplished and a long-delayed debt paid, but simply because it was no longer safe to resist. The Irish people

might, and probably would, stop the supplies to a church and an aristocracy which insulted and oppressed them; and the House of Commons could not be counted on for putting down even rebellion unless concessions were made. These were the Duke's motives as he has himself explained them. The insensibility of a people who were not touched by this noble generosity has been naturally a theme of indignant reproof down to our own day.\*

\*The Duke wrote to Peel (Sept. 12th, 1728): "If I could believe that the Irish nobility and gentry would recover their lost influence, the just influence of property, without making those concessions, I would *not* move." To Dean Phillpotts, who urged him to concede nothing, he wrote—"They (Parliament) will not put down the Association, they will not even put down rebellion, if it should occur, unless concessions should be made." To the King he disclosed the imminent danger of delay. "I do not suggest an impossible hypothesis to your majesty, when I state the possibility (I might state it more strongly) of the Roman Catholic tenantry of the country refusing to pay tithes or rents. The clergy and the landlords might have recourse to the law. But how is the law to be enforced? How can they distrain for rent or tithes upon millions of tenants? This measure which will most probably be the first of resistance and rebellion in Ireland, will occasion the ruin of all your majesty's loyal subjects residing in that country, and of many in this; and it must be observed that it will give the rebellion a vast resource of money which your majesty's loyal subjects will have been deprived."—The Duke of Wellington's "Despatches and Correspondence," Vol. II., p. 135.

The Duke's Irish correspondents took a still gloomier view of the situation. The Knight of Kerry, an Irish

The Tithe Agitation. The tithes were a tax laid on the tillers of the soil for the support of the Protestant clergy; those who held grazing farms were exempt. It was rendered specially odious by the manner in which it was collected by the proctors. These were usually paid a percentage on the amount collected, and therefore had a direct interest in extorting as much as possible. There sprung up a general movement in the south against the paying of this tax. The military were often called out to support the proctors in making seizures, and loss of life frequently followed, as at Carrickshock. Hence a new Act was passed reducing the tithes and changing the process of collection. A more important change took place in the administration of justice under Lord Mulgrave, advised by *Thomas Drummond*. The exclusion of Catholics from juries was restrained, and the practice

A. D.  
1835

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proprietor and Privy Councillor, warned the Duke that there was grave danger of an insurrection headed by Irishmen from America, whether the leaders desired it or not, and that on this occasion the Catholic gentry could no longer be counted on as allies of England. "Every parish," he said, "is a regiment . . . we hold our lives at the mere discretion of the Catholic population. I never knew the Protestant mind of Ireland dismayed before." He advised immediate concessions, without which this country was lost, or only to be retained by means and in a condition worse than its loss.—*Ibid.*, Vol. IV., p. 213.

of appointing partisans of too shameful antecedents, to public functions was interrupted.\*

Since the return of the Tories to power, however, such scruples disappeared, and the old ascendancy method of selecting officials had been revived. A brace of legal gladiators, who had become intolerable to the House of Commons by violence and indiscretion, were sent to administer what was called justice in Ireland.† It was in relation to these appointments that O'Connell justified himself for supporting the Whigs in office, by a memorable stroke of humor:—"A

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\* Lord Mulgrave excited great indignation among a large class of highly respectable persons by refusing to permit the master of an Orange Lodge, who had been tried for murder, and who has since been tried for a second murder, to act as sub-sheriff, and select juries throughout a northern county. This man's name was Sam Gray, and his character was so little a matter of doubt, that several years before he was selected for official distinction, the Chief Secretary in Ireland, Lord Francis Leveson Gower, wrote of him to the Prime Minister, the Duke of Wellington, as "a man who had killed one Catholic, and would be very happy to kill another;" and another he actually was tried for killing some years after, and a second time escaped punishment, it was believed, by the connivance of his confederates in the jury box.

† He (Peel) had been fortunate in early disengaging himself of the Orange counsellors, who conducted his Irish questions when in opposition; vacant judgeships had opportunely satisfied the recognised and respectable claims of Mr. Serjeant Jackson and Mr. Leffroy."—Mr. Disraeli's "Life of Lord George Bentinck."

Whig Government," he said, "is like Paddy's old hat thrust into a broken pane; it is throue it doesn't let in much light, but at any rate it keeps out the cowld."

The social condition of the country during the half-century then drawing to a close was without parallel in Europe.

The whole population was dependent on agriculture. There were minerals, but none found in what miners call "paying quantities." There was no manufacture except linen, and the remnant of a woollen trade, slowly dying out before the pitiless competition of Yorkshire. What the island chiefly produced was food; which was exported to richer countries to enable the cultivator to pay an inordinate rent. Foreign travellers saw with amazement an island possessing all the natural conditions of a great commerce, as bare of commerce as if it lay in some bye-way of the world which enterprise had not yet reached. Harbors looking towards the prosperous Western world were completely vacant; harbors looking towards the East were occupied only by ships which carried raw produce and human food to England. There was no foreign trade; the wines of Spain and Portugal, the silks of France, the drugs and spices of the East, the timber of the north, only reached the island

through England. The noble quays of the Liffey, which would rival the Lung d'Arno if Dublin were the seat of a national Government, held only a few coal barges and fruit boats. Similar decay was nearly universal. The provincial towns in general had an unprosperous or bankrupt look. There was scarcely a county which could not show some public work begun before the Union and now a ruin. When an Irish gentlemen visited other countries the contrast turned his blood to gall; Lord Cloncurry declared that there was more misery in Dublin than in all Europe.

The condition of the two classes who live by agriculture furnished a singular contrast. The great proprietors were two or three hundred—the heirs of the Undertakers, for the most part, and Absentees; the mass of the country was owned by a couple of thousand others, who lived in splendor, and even profusion; and for these the peasant ploughed, sowed, tended, and reaped a harvest which he never shared. Rent, in other countries, means the surplus after the farmer has been liberally paid for his skill and labor; in Ireland it meant the whole produce of the soil except a potato-pit. If the farmer strove for more, his master knew how to bring him to speedy submission. He could carry away his im-

plements of trade by the law of distress, or rob him of his sole pursuit in life by the law of eviction. He could, and habitually did, seize the stools and pots in his miserable cabin, the blanket that sheltered his children, the cow that gave them nourishment. There were just and humane landlords, men who performed the duties which their position imposed, and did not exaggerate its right; but they were a small minority. The mild Berkeley, in his day, spoke of certain Irish proprietors as "vultures with iron bowels;" and landlords of this type were still plentiful. There was nowhere in Europe a propertied class who did so little for the people, and took so much from them. The productive power of an estate was often doubled and quadrupled by the industry of the farmers; and its rental rose accordingly. In later times rents shot up with war prices, with protection, with the system of con acre (under which small patches were let at an exorbitant rate to laborers to grow potatoes), but when any of these stimulants was withdrawn they did not come down. Rents impossible to be paid were kept on the books of an estate, and arrears duly recorded to hold the tenant in perpetual subjection. For in addition to his labor the landlord required his vote and various menial services.

The Lady Bountiful of the parish—for women are more unfeeling and inconsiderate in their exactions than men—often required the children to be sent to a proselytizing school, on pain of immediate ejectment. O'Connell frequently demanded how they would like to have it made compulsory on them to send their children to be educated at Maynooth on pain of forfeiting their estates? but they regarded the absurd comparison with proper contempt. The food of the peasant was potatoes, with a little milk or salt; flesh-meat he rarely tasted, except when he went as a harvest laborer to England, “to earn the rent.” The country was famous for the production of butter, and the growth of beef and mutton, and especially pork; but butter, beef, mutton, or pork was nearly as unknown as an article of diet among the peasantry as among the Hindoos. Of this food, such as it was, there was rarely enough. Famines were frequent, and every other year destitution killed a crowd of peasants. Sometimes the tortured serfs rose in nocturnal jacquerie against the system; and then a cry of “rebellion” was raised, and England was assured that these intractable barbarians were again (as the indictment always charged) “levying war against the King's majesty.” There were indeed causes enough for national disaffec-

tion, but of these the poor peasant knew nothing; he was contending for so much miserable food as would save his children from starvation. There were sometimes barbarous agrarian murders—murders of agents and bailiffs chiefly, but occasionally of landlords. It would be shameful to forget that these savage crimes were often the result of savage provocation. Lord Melbourne (when Chief Secretary for Ireland) uttered a judgment on one victim which unhappily might stand for many of his class. “If one-half of what is told me of him be true,” he wrote, “and it comes from many different quarters, if he had forty thousand lives there would have been no wonder if they had been all taken.”\* The peasants often sympathised with these crimes—a fact painful and horrible to contemplate; but let us remember that all England went into a delirium of joy when the knife of Fulton struck down the favorite of Charles I.; for to hate their enemies is the human instinct which religion finds it hardest to control. The agricultural laborer was in a still worse condition than the farmer. Wages in Ireland in the reign of Queen Victoria was often lower than it had been in England in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

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\* Mr. M'Cullagh Torrens’ “Life of Lord Melbourne,” Vol. I., p. 288.

Tipperary had the reputation of being an insubordinate county; the Railway Commission Report of the state of the laborers at this time in Tipperary may perhaps help to explain the fact. "They go through the fields and gather the wild weeds, they boil them with salt, and they live on them without even a potato to eat along with them." It is charged that the Irish peasant was thriftless and ignorant. He was not free from the faults slavery and misery engender; how could he be indeed? It must be admitted that he was not trained in the minor morals of order and foresight, and for education had been merely taught to sign his name and read his prayer-book. But his grandfather was a Papist who was liable to be transported if he learned the multiplication table; his father was not permitted to possess landed property, arms, or the franchise; and in his own day there were no public schools at which his religion and his race were not bywords of scorn.\*

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\* The country was naked of timber, the cabins of the peasantry were squalid and unfurnished. Mr. Carlyle reproves a lazy, thriftless people, who would not perform the simple operation of planting trees; and Mr. Froude frowns upon cottages whose naked walls are never draped by climbing roses or flowering creepers. But how much more eloquent is fact than rhetoric! The Irish landlords made a law that when the tenant planted a tree it became not his own property but his



## SECTION XVIII.

### NEGLECT AND DESOLATION.

In the early part of the present century, when the condition of the peasantry was considerably improved, it is officially recorded that one-half of them lived in mud-wall cabins of one room. The women and many of the men went habitually barefooted and half-clad, under a moist and stormy sky. An eminent French statesman\* visiting Ireland in 1824 declared that he had seen the Indian in his wigwam, and the negro in his chains, but that the condition of the Irish tenant at will was worse than that of the savage or the slave. And above them they saw a gay, luxuri-

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master's; and the established practice of four-fifths of the Irish landlords, when a tenant exhibited such signs of prosperity as a garden, or a whitewashed cabin, was to reward his industry by increasing his rent. Peasants will not plant or make improvements on these conditions, nor, I fancy, would philosophers.

This is a particularly useful reflection for the young Irish-American.

\* De Beaumont.

ous, but frank and fearless aristocracy, and a Church which was to them as Dives was to Lazarus. The gentry had grown accustomed to regard the whole produce of the land as their natural right. If this claim was disputed, a shriek of remonstrance was addressed to the Government, and judges in red robes or soldiers in red coats made short work of the dissentients. "The country was garrisoned," to employ the language of Michael Sadlier, the political economist, "to protect the property of those whose conduct occasioned all the evils under which Ireland had groaned for centuries . . . and which would not be worth a day's purchase were the proprietors its sole protectors."

The state of public education was a peculiar scandal. For the Protestant lad of the middle class there were endowed schools where he got an education almost free, and an opulent University which furnished scholarships, fellowships, church patronage, and other dazzling prizes. For the Catholic lad, unless in the rare instances when he could be sent to the Continent or to the Catholic colleges maintained in England, the State had decreed ignorance and idleness. Up to 1832 the children of the industrious classes were taught in hedge schools—schools held in the open air for want of the shelter of a roof.

The teaching was probably rude and chaotic, but it used to be believed that the hedge schoolmasters were strong in classics, and it is certain that they sometimes sowed seed which under the care of Irish colleges in France, Spain and Belgium ripened into famous scholarships and eminent achievements.

The struggling peasant bore the whole burthen of the Established Church. Land since the Reformation had been granted to the proprietors subject to this charge; but early in the eighteenth century the landowners, in Parliament assembled, transferred the burthen to the tenantry. The peasant paid also a moiety of the poor rate. But these were equitable provisions compared to the law regulating County Cess. County Cess was expended on the administration of justice, local defence, and other charges which belong naturally to property. But the whole burden was imposed on the peasant, who of all men had least interest in property; and it was expended by grand juries of landlords, often on shameless jobs, without the smallest control by those who paid the money. The wildest inventions of political satire are transcended by the history of local taxation in Ireland.

A long monopoly of power is a feast that not only intoxicates but besots. The Protestants in

Ireland had been like Roman citizens in Gaul or British officials in India. They not merely affected airs of pre-eminence and patronage, but honestly believed themselves a superior race. In Edmund Burke's time many Protestant gentlemen in Ireland, as he tells us, never conversed with a Catholic in their lives, unless to give directions to a workman, or to ask their way across country. A few months before he introduced the Emancipation Bill, the Duke of Wellington threatened to dismiss Mr. Villiers, the Earl of Clarendon, known to the last generation, for having invited to dinner the Catholic leader, Richard Shiel, afterwards the darling of London clubs.\* So late as 1841 Mr. Thackeray visiting a Catholic squire who cultivated more land than any gentleman farmer in Leinster, and in another pursuit employed more workmen than any manufacturer in Dublin, learned with amazement that the parson who lived close to his gate, though they maintained friendly relations, would not break bread with him.† But the assumption of a gentleman was modest, compared to the haughty superiority which a clown or a shopboy in Ulster, who sang psalms on a Sunday, affected towards his equal, who went to mass.

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\*Greville's "Memoirs."

†"Irish Sketch Book."

Of the Irish Protestants the Presbyterians were a moiety. The liberality which they had shown towards Catholics a half-century before had nearly disappeared. Many of them were Orangemen, and some of their most conspicuous ministers were as vehement Unionists as their predecessors had been vehement United Irishmen. The *regium donum* brought the ecclesiastical spokesman of their Church into connection with the State, a relation which among the descendants of the Covenanters, as formerly among the Huguenots, gradually replaced vigilant distrust by a lazy acquiescence in the will of the Government. It was the fixed policy of the landlords to keep alive sectarian feelings. The Orangemen constituted for them what the Mean Whites constituted for the American slave-owners, a retinue who followed them without pay or plunder. It was only necessary to gratify their pride of class. Now and then a rumor was mysteriously spread that the Catholics of the South were about to invade Ulster and to massacre the Protestants, and it was not an uncommon event to read of the wrecking of a Catholic village in the North, on some Orange anniversary, by way of retaliation for the invasion which never came off. And many who had no share in the outrage were supposed to wink complacently,

at it. There is a peasant song which paints with touches of genuine feeling the agony of the tortured Catholic in the hands of the tormentor.

"They came in the mornin' scoffin' and scornin'  
Saying Ware you racked? Ware you sore abused?  
Oh base deluders, you're worse nor Judas  
Who sowld our Saviour to the wicked Jews."

The towns were ruled in a fashion which the Musselman could scarcely excel. Up to 1842 the bulk of the rates, and generally some exceptional and offensive burden in addition, were borne by the Catholics; all the offices and employments were enjoyed by favorite lackeys of the minority, appointed by a governing body exclusively Protestant.

The minority held all their pleasant monopolies on the condition of satisfying England that they were in the right and their victims in the wrong. England was not hard to satisfy on this point, and the Undertakers never failed to keep a press at work to blacken the people; but at bottom they were pursuing their own policy, not England's. An accomplished writer who inherited the blood of an Orange leader,\* declared that they had played one uniform and constant part; getting all they could in the name of Protestantism, and when concessions could

not be postponed, sacrificing without scruple what was dearest to their poorer Protestant brethren. And Irish Whigs insisted that had they not maintained an insolent and aggressive pulpit, and a venomous stipendary press, a good understanding might have grown up between the two countries. This privileged minority constituted all the Ireland known to London society. The stately courteous gentleman, the head of some historic house, idealized in Lever's later romances, the vulgar boastful spendthrift, speaking a superfine broken English, and repudiating all sympathy with his native country, caricatured in Thackeray's novels, as far as they existed at all, were specimens of the Anglo-Irish. The native gentleman of Milesian descent, painted somewhat *en beau* by John Banim and Lady Morgan in novels now little read, had Paris for his capital rather than London. The leaders of society in Dublin belonged to neither of these classes. They were invariably great English officials, generally more foreign in spirit and manners than even in blood. Some one compared them to telegraph posts, dry, sapless, inflexible, never taking root in the soil, and never putting forth any friendly shade.

Of the base parody of justice which existed in Ireland the reader will get some knowledge in

the course of the narrative. It was worst in Ulster; there were more than eleven hundred magistrates there, of whom scarce a dozen were Catholics. In many baronies and in several counties there was not a single Catholic in the commission. Very often the entire bench and all its servants were members of an Orange Lodge.

A. D.  
1842

## SECTION XIX.

### EDUCATION AND TEMPERANCE.

As a set-off to this long catalogue of discouragements there were two facts of happy augury. In 1842 half a million of children were receiving education in the National Schools under a system designed to establish religious equality, and administered by Catholic and Protestant commissioners. And the Teetotal movement was at its height. Thousands were accepting every week a pledge of total abstinence from Father Mathew, a young priest, whom the gifts of nature and the accidents of fortune combined to qualify for the mission of a Reformer. Born in Tipperary, educated in Kilkenny, and long stationed as a friar in Cork, he knew the people of the South intimately. A sweet and patient disposition, a homely eloquence, impressive mainly from the depth of conviction from which it

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\*Dr. Gifford, editor of the *Standard*.

sprang, a certain air of superiority wholly free from arrogance, though attributable perhaps to his birth in the middle class, and a reputation for practical benevolence, enabled him not only to win the hearts but to impress the imagination of the people. They came to speak of him fondly as the Apostle of Temperance. From Munster he made his way to the other provinces, and at this time there was probably no county, and no considerable town, without a Teetotal Society. Public houses had been shut up, breweries and distilleries thrown out of employment; the quantity of whisky consumed in Ireland had diminished one-half, and crime had diminished in even greater proportion. The enrolled Teetotallers were computed to exceed two millions. His mission had succeeded, in the language of Maria Edgeworth, "beyond all the predictions of experience, all examples from the past and all analogy. There was the beginning of political reforms also. After their compact with O'Connell the Whigs sent a Lord Lieutenant and Chief Secretary to Ireland, who for the first time since the fall of Limerick treated the bulk of the nation as the social and political equals of the minority. The minority had been so long accustomed to make and administer the laws, and to occupy the places of authority and distinction,

that they regarded the change as a revolt; and Lord Mulgrave and Thomas Drummond as the successors of Tyrconnell and Nugent. None of these reforms moral or political were half a dozen years in operation when the Nation was established; none of them except Teetotalism had penetrated to the mass of the people; the system they disturbed had lasted more than four generations and moulded the habits and character of the people.

Among the middle class Catholics a great change had taken place. A generation had reached manhood who knew the Penal Laws only by tradition. Their fathers had grown rich in trade or the professions, had purchased land, and shared the excitement of a great political contest, and the sons educated for the most part in English or foreign colleges, or in the Dublin University, laughed at the pretensions of Protestant ascendancy. This was the class destined to form the bulk of the party afterwards known as Young Ireland. But the mass of the people were still poor, uneducated, and hampered by laws of shameful unfairness. The Penal Code had left nearly four millions of them unable to read or write, and nearly a million and a half more who could read but not write.\* There was

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\* The exact figures from the Parliamentary returns

a State Church and there were State Schools, but in two-thirds of the parishes there were no congregations, no school-house and no service. There were rectors enjoying pleasant incomes, and bishops making colossal fortunes. By a return laid before parliament it appeared that eleven bishops in less than fifty years had contrived to bequeath to their families an average of a hundred and sixty thousand pounds apiece. The churches erected before the Reformation had been seized and appropriated to the Establishment, and when more were supposed to be necessary they were bountifully supplied, chiefly at the cost of the Catholic ratepayers. Where diocesan schools existed, the teaching proffered to Catholic children was strictly Protestant teaching, with the unconcealed purpose of proselytism. But in these arrangements a cynic remarked, at least the poor were on an apostolic scale; there were more than a million and a half of the people living mainly on alms.

This was the condition of the country when the Nation was established, and when the Union had had a trial of over forty years. The island which, before the coming of the Dane or the

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are 829,000 females, and 580,000 males above five years, who can only read but not write; 2,142,000 females, 1,623,000 males, who can neither read nor write.

Norman, its own people had made the seat of industrial arts and the School of the West, was now the most ignorant and impoverished of Christian States. The island to which, in latter times, its national Parliament had brought back trade, commerce, and prosperity, was sickening under a burthen of paupers without hope of employment, because trade and commerce had disappeared. Is it surprising that it led many men to the conclusion that the connection between Ireland and the dominant country must be put on another footing, or must be brought to an end? On less provocation the sober colonists of North America broke away from the empire, and the grave Belgian *bourgeoisie* broke away from their legislative Union. On less provocation indeed the phlegmatic Hollanders opened their dykes and let in the sea.

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#### NOTES ON CHAPTER IV.

##### O'NEILL AND O'DONNELL.

When they were mere youths the Queen's Government had made each of these chieftains the subject of a separate experiment, which had equally failed. Hugh O'Neill, who was not in the right line of succession to the chieftancy, but near enough to make a convenient "Queen's O'Neill," who might be set up in opposition to the choice of the clan, was brought to London, trained in the civil and military learning of the period,

converted to the religion of the State, placed in the English army, and finally sent to Ireland to serve with the Queen's troops in the Desmond War. For these and other services, not pleasant to recall, he was created Earl of Tyrone, and taken into the special favour of her Grace, who had a tenderness for handsome young soldiers. But when Hugh settled down at Dungannon among his own race, and saw the seamy side of the royal policy in Ireland, his sympathy with the Court cooled fast, quarrels arose, reproaches and menaces were exchanged, and after long delay and apparent hesitation, Hugh took his stand plainly at the head of the party of resistance. Hugh O'Donnell had been dealt with in a different fashion, but one that proved in the upshot as unavailing. An English ship masquerading as a merchantman laden with Spanish wine, anchored on the coast of Lough Swilly in the O'Donnell's country; the young chieftain and his following were invited on board to taste the generous vintage of Xeres, and when they were carousing in the cabin, the sails were set and he was carried away to Dublin, and lodged a prisoner in the keep known as Birmingham Tower. After several years' imprisonment he escaped, and regained his native mountains, still under the age of manhood, but in excellent temper to head a revolt, and forthwith made peace with his rival, Hugh O'Neill, and placed himself under the command of that prince.

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#### CROMWELL'S ACCOUNT OF THE PLANTATION.

Protocols and proclamations are not models of veracity; but Cromwell published a "Declaration for the undeceiving of deluded people," which it would be difficult to parallel in history. We know how the Plantators got their lands from the Crown, how the natives were driven out without compensation, to live—if they could live—in the mountains and bogs; how they were treated as public enemies, and the Parliament of England was threatening to extirpate them, when they rose

to assert their natural rights to possess their own country, as the Scotch, stimulated by the party to which Cromwell belonged, had already risen. But this is the account of the transaction the Lord Protector issued for the information of mankind: "Englishmen had good inheritances which many of them purchased with their money; they and their ancestors, from you and your ancestors. They had good Leases from Irishmen, for long times to come; great stocks thereupon, houses and plantations erected at their own cost and charge. They lived peaceably and honestly amongst you. You had generally equal benefit of the protection of England with them; and equal justice from the Laws—saving what was necessary for the State, out of reasons of State, to put upon some few people, apt to rebel upon the instigation of such as you. You broke this union. You, unprovoked, put the English to the most unheard-of and most barbarous Massacre (without respect of sex or age) that ever the Sun beheld. And at a time when Ireland was in perfect Peace."

It is probable that Cromwell was in part misled by his Council in Dublin, who had their own motives for deceiving him; but certain it is, that a more utterly untrue and untrustworthy account of a human transaction has rarely been printed than this declaration of the divine-appointed ruler.



## SECTION XX.

### REPEAL AND FAMINE.

As early as 1834 O'Connell had brought the question of the repeal of the Act of Union before the House of Commons. The Repeal Association was founded to abolish that Act and restore a parliament to Ireland. He thought that if the wish of the people could be proved by great demonstrations, their demands would be granted as a matter of course. He moved a resolution in the Dublin corporation for a petition to parliament for Repeal, and made on this occasion what is the most eloquent of all his speeches. The meetings held throughout the country were attended by vast numbers; hence they went by the name of monster meetings. The government became alarmed, and sent over large bodies of troops, and war ships were anchored in the harbours. A Repeal meeting was appointed to take place at Clontarf on Sunday, October 8th. The evening before, a proclamation was issued

**A. D.**

**1841**

**A. D.**

**1842**

forbidding it. All the night was spent by the popular leaders in preventing the people from assembling, and when the troops marched to Clontarf the next day, they found no crowd to disperse. O'Connell and eight others were

**A. D.**  
**1843** prosecuted for conspiracy, and convicted, the jury lists having been so arranged that the jury was entirely protestant. The verdict was reversed on appeal to the House of Lords, Lord Denman declaring that such a trial was 'a delusion, a mockery, and a snare,' and O'Connell was set free after three months' imprisonment. Soon after his health began to give way. The sight of the people perishing of famine and disease, and flying from the country in thousands, aggravated his disease. He died at Genoa on his way to Rome, May 15th, 1847. In his last will he ordered that his heart should be carried to Rome, and his body buried in Ireland. He is interred at Glasnevin.

**A. D.**  
**1845** In the middle of September, the potato blight appeared for the first time in Ireland. It spread rapidly and very soon a great part of the crop became unfit for food. O'Connell urged the government to prevent the exportation of corn, to stop distillation and brewing, to open the ports to receive provisions from other countries, and to set public works on foot. The meas-

ures which the government did adopt at last were ridiculously out of proportion to the calamity. The corn crop of that year was a very abundant one. Of cereals, 3,250,000 quarters, as well as great numbers of cattle, sheep and swine—almost enough to support the whole population of Ireland for a twelvemonth—were exported to England during the four last months of the year. It was famine in the midst of plenty, ‘a phenomenon such as no other country in the world exhibits.’ The following year the disease shewed itself in a more virulent form, destroying the whole produce of a million and a half acres, valued at £20,000,000. The famine, with the fever and other diseases which it caused, increased, so that great numbers died; many emigrated, often carrying with them the seeds of the disease, and dying on board ship or immediately on landing in America. It was reckoned that the population of Ireland was lessened by two-and-a-half millions during the famine, one half of the number having died of hunger or disease, the other half having left the country.

Among the followers of O’Connell there were some who did not believe in his constitutional policy, and refused to put their trust in those on whom he chiefly relied. In 1842 Duffy, Davis and Dillon had established the Nation news-

**A. D.** paper. Later they were joined by John Mitchel,  
**1847** who openly advocated insurrection, and especially resistance to the land system, which lay at the root of all the evils from which the country was suffering. He was brought to trial, convicted by such a jury as convicted O'Connell, and sentenced to transportation for life. Smith O'Brien now put himself at the head of the party. An insurrection was attempted in Tipperary, but the people, ill-prepared for a struggle, did not respond to his call in any considerable number. He and several other leaders were arrested soon after and transported to the penal settlement of Van Diemen's Land.

A. D.  
1858

In spite of the failure of so many attempts to obtain the independence of Ireland by force of arms, the *Phoenix Society* was established for this purpose by James Stephens, who had taken part in the rising of '48. The time seemed opportune, as the whole power of England was then engaged in quelling the Indian mutiny. The society spread extensively in Cork and Kerry. After a few months several of the members were arrested, and, pleading guilty, were released. The funeral of M'Manus, one of the '48 men, who had died in San Francisco, aroused the feelings of the people and increased the number of Fenians in Ireland. A newspaper called the *Irish People* was established to spread the doctrine of armed resistance. September 20th was fixed on for the rising, but the government by its spies was informed of what was about to take place, and arrested the leaders, O'Leary, O'Don-

A. D.  
1865

ovan, Kickham, Luby and others ; a month later Stephens was arrested, but after a few days he escaped from the gaol. The others were tried and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. In America the society spread very widely, great numbers of the Irish who had taken part in the war hoping to use in Ireland the knowledge which they had acquired, and contributing liberally for the purchase of arms. Many of these came to Ireland. In England there was a plot to seize on Chester castle and the 20,000 stand of arms stored there ; but the government was warned in time to prevent its success. In Manchester a policeman was killed, inadvertently as many thought, by some Fenians in an attempt to release two of their body from a prison van. For this Allen, Larkin and O'Brien were hanged. Soon after an attempt was made to blow up the wall of Clerkenwell prison, where some of the society were confined ; it failed to effect the purpose for which it was intended, but it caused the death of several persons. There were partial risings in Dublin, Cork, and Kerry ; but with little more effect than to fill the gaols and to send some scores into penal servitude.

A. D.  
**1867**

## SECTION XXI.

### POLITICAL CHANGES.

'There are three branches of the Irish upas tree,' said Mr. Gladstone, 'the established church, the system of land tenure, and the system of national education.' The alarm spread by the Fenians caused attention to be turned in England to the condition of the protestant church as a State Church in Ireland, where the protestants were but one to ten of the population. English statesmen had long before declared it to be 'the most absurd and indefensible of all institutions in the civilized world,' 'the foulest practical abuse that ever existed,' 'opposed alike to justice, to policy, and to religious principle, and kept alive with the greatest difficulty and at the greatest expense.' There were 200 parishes maintaining clergymen and churches in which there was not even one protestant. In a great many other parishes the number was very small. Yet all those parishes paid tithe. The

**A. D.  
1869** annual income of the protestant church was £600,000, of which £400,000 was tithe. By the Act of Disestablishment, which was passed July 26th, 1. The protestant church in Ireland ceased to be the State Church; 2. The bishops lost their seats in the House of Lords; 3. Of the church property, valued at 16 millions, nearly 11 millions were given back to the church to satisfy vested interests, and five millions were kept 'to be employed in the relief of unavoidable calamity in Ireland.' The Act came into operation January 1st, 1871.

The land question has been for centuries the burning question in Ireland, since, for the great majority of the Irish people, the land is the sole means of living, and depriving them of it is a 'sentence of death.' After the various confiscations and 'settlements,' they were mere tenants at will. Endless committees of parliament, after long inquiry into their condition, found it to be miserable in the extreme, and innumerable bills were introduced as remedies, but little further was done. The Land Act of 1870 offered no protection to the tenants against excessive rents, and when bad harvests came from 1870 to 1879, and famine was again threatening, the evictions reached the number of 10,000 during five years. To meet these evils the Land League



was founded by Davitt, Parnell, and others. They demanded that *Griffith's valuation*, made in 1838 for the poor law taxation, should be taken as the fixed standard of rent. Rackrenters and evictors were 'boycotted.' The leaders were prosecuted, but the jury disagreed. A new Coercion Act was introduced, empowering the government to imprison without trial, and for any length of time, such as were suspected of intimidation or incitement thereto. The gaols were filled; but this did not prove a remedy. An Act was now passed, establishing a Land Court, to consist of three members, which had power to fix 'a judicial rent' for a period of fifteen years, during which time the rent could not be increased, nor eviction take place except for non-payment of rent; it gave also to the tenant a right to sell his good will in the land, the landlord having the right of pre-emption. This Act has been received as an instalment of justice. During the three following years 'judicial rents' were fixed on about 150,000 cases, and the rents reduced 20 per cent.

A. D.  
1881

The penal laws of the 17th and 18th centuries affected the schoolmaster as well as the priest (*See p. 126, ante*). But the innate love of the people for knowledge saved them from 'the debasement of human nature,' which would have followed necessarily a state of ignorance and

the hedge-school and the poor scholar kept alive the flame of learning in dark days. This love of learning was, however, at length met in better fashion. In 1831 the National System of Education was established, providing for the secular instruction of children, while leaving the religious instruction to the parents. The evils which would have arisen from such a system have been guarded against carefully by the pastors of the church, and in a great part of the country it has become in later times practically denominational. To meet the demand for higher education, the Queen's Colleges were established in 1851, in which the same system of 'undenominational' education was carried on. The Catholic University was established in opposition to them, but the government refused to endow it or to acknowledge its degrees. After thirty years of contention the University Bill was passed, abolishing the Queen's University, and replacing it by the Royal University, which confers degrees on all who give sufficient proof of their knowledge, no matter where or how acquired.

A. D.  
1881

The movement for Home Rule began in 1873. Its object was, like the Repeal agitation, to obtain for Ireland a separate government which would manage local affairs, while questions of

imperial policy would be left to the imperial parliament; such a system exists in almost every colony of England. In the election of the following year sixty-four members, pledged to this policy, were returned, their leader being Isaac Butt, of whom, though then his opponent, O'Connell, had foretold 'that he would yet be found on the side of the people.' Irish measures of great importance were often brought forward in parliament, supported by a great majority of Irish members, but they were rejected almost without a discussion. In 1875 Charles Stewart Parnell was elected member for Meath; he bore an honoured name, several members of his family having stood by Grattan to the last in his struggles. Under his leadership a party was formed, which, independent of English politics, pledged itself to have only the welfare of Ireland in view. The question of Home Rule was forced on the attention of parliament and of the public, with the result that after a few years it became an election cry with one of the great English parties, and a Bill was introduced by Mr. Gladstone by which Home Rule would be granted to Ireland. It passed through the House of Commons by a majority of thirty-four. But it was rejected by the House of Lords.

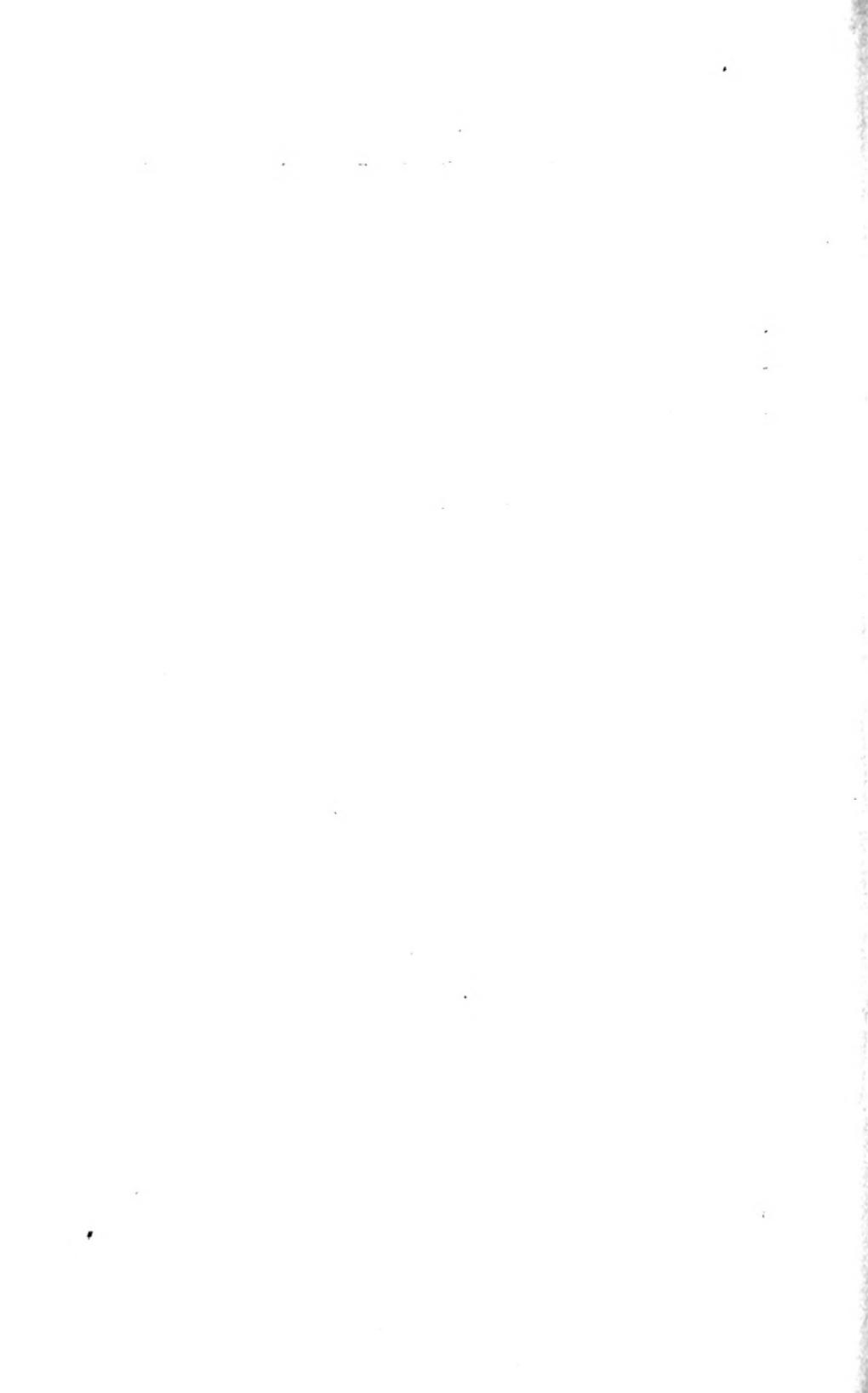
The Liberal ministry party suffered defeat in

A. D.  
1893

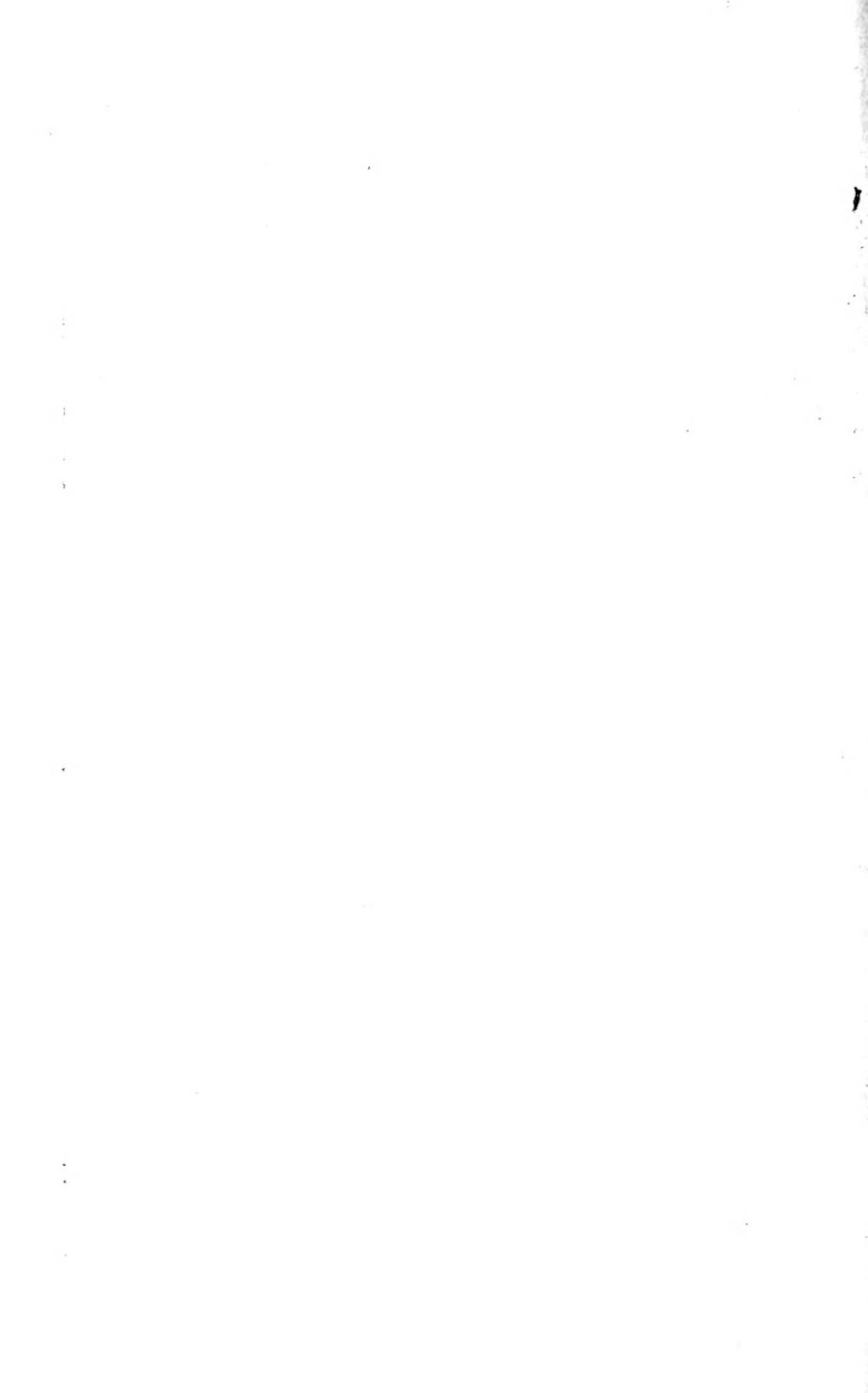
1895, and the Tories took office, which they still retain. The Nationalists of Ireland are at present represented in the British House of Commons by a party of eighty members of which Mr. John Redmond is sessional chairman.

THE END.











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